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WEDNESDAY, JULY 11, 2012

## Burlington Free Press

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news comes  
from  
SPEECHLESS



MY DRIVE TO THE MALL: GREEN MOUNTAIN • 1C

TURNING WINDOSKI INTO 'LOVE CANAL' OF NOISE: LETTERS • 12B



## NOT-SO-FREE PRESS

On orders from Gannett, Vermont's largest daily undergoes a risky media makeover



BILL HEINTZ  
Staff writer

For a time this spring, the biggest story in the *Burlington Free Press* appeared to be... itself.

Over the course of three months, Vermont's largest daily newspaper ran

more than two dozen stories and editorials about a host of changes coming to 181 College Street, a \$14 million printing-press rebuild, a radical redesign from broadsheet to tabloid and a new subscription model charging for online content.

"In my 25 years in the media industry, I can't think of a time when I've been

this excited and fired up about what we do — and how we're doing it," publisher Jim Eagler wrote in a characteristically ebullient February column announcing the changes.

Indeed, the news behind the newspaper was big — but it wasn't all sunshine and roses.

See FREE PRESS, Page 26

## EXCLUSIVE!

BABYSITTING SUCCESS IN BURLINGTON: HOMETOWN • 5A

MILTON STUDENT DOODLES HER WAY TO A WIN: HOMETOWN • 6A



## WATCHING WINDOSKI

PAGE 30

Surveillance cameras eye downtown

## PEDALING VERMONT

PAGE 32

Leah Tolino bikes border to border

## MIND OVER METAL

PAGE 62

David Stromeyer sculptures at BCA

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### FRI 7/27 • 8PM BOB MARLEY: WICKED FUNNY

A regular at the Aspen and Montreal comedy festivals, Marley was named one of Variety's "10 Comedians to Watch."

#### UPCOMING EVENTS:

SAT 8/11: CHRISTOPHER O'BREY

FRI 8/17: SECOND CITY FOR PRESIDENT

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THE LAST

# SEVEN DAYS

COMPILED BY ANTHONY BRUNEAU & TAYLOR MACHADO

WEEK IN REVIEW

JULY 14-20, 2012

**F**or an unperturbed green thumb around Vermont,

comes the first reminder of the humor still in the summer: What gardeners thought was nutrient-rich compost enhancer turned out to be an earthworm's last meal.

As staff writer Corin Hirsch reports on Page 1 this week, Entomologists with the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources' Pest Management Program — which coordinates and publishes the Vermont Green Playbook — recently confirmed that both bulk and bagged soil and compost are contaminated with two persistent herbicides, both of which are banned in Vermont:草甘膦 and picloram.

State health officials say the amount of weed killer in the compost isn't enough to hurt humans, but they've got this comfort to gleaning the results of a recent nationwide consumer survey of gardeners, who told Hirsch they plan to request the removal of a garden center that contaminated its compost.

Ken Iacobucci, owner/gardener at Winooski-based Organic Garden of the Year from Gardner's Supply in 2005, but this year is full of over-grown, blossoms with curved leaves — thanks to a bad batch of compost. CGMS general manager Tom Morris says that Green Mountain Compost, a company Iacobucci purchased for heavy metal contamination, is not responsible for the composts that are banned.

Will customers such as Winooski's Iacobucci and Riddle get compensation for their loss? All options — including monetary compensation — are still on the table, Morris says.

## ATTACK OF THE KILLER COMPOST



## facing facts



### PEACE POOP

Another week, another batch of ranking the Vermont. Actually, it's No. 2 on the "peace index" of American states. The lower the #3, the more dangerous the location.



### SO LONG, MICKEY

After 104 years of operation, the school's Burlington High School Class of 1910 graduated on Saturday, June 23, just in time for... Mickey!



### LIBERAL ENGLAND

British prime minister David Cameron's policies are causing a stir — Edith Blackwood — widow of the Royal Windsor in the job that had been open for over six months — is angry over her



### WHEELS AT INDUSTRIE

An armed robbery suspect was killed by his captors last night, and the police are investigating. Maybe he couldn't afford Chittenden County gas.

**\$45,067,395**

That's how much  
the University of Vermont  
Foundation raised  
in the past year —  
some usual  
causes for the  
university

## TOP FIVE

HOT TOPICS THIS WEEK

- 1 "Vermonters' Compost Project Not Much Fresh Starts Since Neighbors Were Expecting" by Kevin J. Kelley. It turns out a compost company being led by Hayesville, N.C., entrepreneur is extracting beneficial bacteria from neighbors.
- 2 "Meet Your Makers" by Helen Jacobs. Vermonters' Makers are launching a pretty cool website with a problem-solving do-it-yourself section.
- 3 "Remembering Up the Hillside" An update from the family of Doug Dethlefsen, author of *The Journals*. The Journals author has been gone since 2010 because the dementia he's been a part of since 2007 — specifically stage 6 — has finally won him.
- 4 "Fair-Garage: 'Sleep Thieves'" by Paul Helmick. A South Burlington garage owner says he's had 20 break-ins on his vehicle at night since last fall. The *AJN*'s discovery on Tuesday, July 10, 2012 — that raccoons break in after sunset — may help explain what's going on.
- 5 "Whiskey Tango Foxtrot: 'Aren't Republicans Like Station Gagging Customers?'" by Kathryn Pringle. Why are gas prices so much higher in the non-taxed part of the state?



### tweet of the week:

@dynamitepig  
My degree is off track  
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from a college? I mean



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Photo: Michael S. Williamson/Corbis

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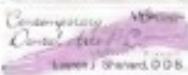
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# contents

JULY 13-19, 2012 VOL 19 NO 28

LOOKING FORWARD



32



54



## NEWS

- 14 Sharon Brumberger, Burlington's Hardest-Working City Councilor, Is Asking All the Right Questions**  
BY KEVIN J. KELLEY

- 18 Solar Flare-Up Six in Charlotte Fight the Fever**  
BY KATHRYN FLASS

- 19 Weinberger Names Blackwood City Attorney**  
BY KEVIN J. KELLEY

## ARTS NEWS

- 20 Two Music Presenters Get It Together for a Classical Collaboration**  
BY AMY LULL

- 21 History Reporting: Book Review of *The Saratoga Girls* by Chris Bohjalian**  
BY KAREN KARHON

- 22 Smart Takes on Film: Special Screenings Guide**  
BY KASSOTI KOURBOS

## REVIEWS

- 58 Music**  
Wolfe Spindel, Valence, Willy Wright, This Is Not a Dream.

- 62 Art**  
Doris Sommer, FICA Center

- 68 Movies**  
Kingsman: The Amazing Spider-Man

## FEATURES

### 26 Not-So-Free Press

Media Co. orders from Greenway, Vermont's largest daily undergoes a study and makeover  
BY PAUL HEINTZ

### 30 Eyes in the Sky

Satellite surveillance: What does it mean — and is it not the only Vermont being monitored?  
BY KEN PICARD

### 32 Seven Lengths of Vermont

Outdoors: Encycle touring: The other side of the image  
BY LEATH TURNER

### 35 Law and Disorder

Theater review: *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* at Scott Michael's Playhouse  
BY GREG ECKERSON

### 36 Turkish Delight?

Food/Taste Test: Turkish Kebab House  
BY ALICE LEWITT

### 40 Share Cropping

Food: Is the CSA boom coming to an end?  
BY KATHRYN FLASS

### 54 iShred

Music: A Vermont band where there's no tab  
BY JOHN FLANAGAN

## COLUMNS

### 12 Fair Game

Open season on Vermont politics  
BY PAUL HEINTZ

### 22 Drawn & Punctuated

Novel graphics from the Center for Cartoon Studies  
BY JOSEPH LAMBERT

### 25 Hackie

A Vermont soldier's interview  
BY ERIC SAN PONTE

### 37 Side Dishes

Food news  
BY CORIN HIRSCH & ALICE LEWITT

### 55 Soundbites

Music on air and online  
BY DAH ROLLES

### 79 Mistress Maeve

Your guide to love and lust  
BY MISTRESS MAEVE

## STUFF TO DO

### 11 The Magnificent 7

### 42 Calendar

### 51 Classes

### 54 Music

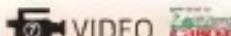
### 62 Art

### 68 Movies



## FUN STUFF

	CLASSIFIEDS
28	Wife beater
29	Hunting
30	Services
31	For myself
32	Business
33	Real estate
34	Jobs
35	Entertainment
36	Personal ads
37	Jobs—recreational
38	Business
39	Personal ads
40	Jobs—recreational
41	Business
42	Personal ads
43	Jobs—recreational
44	Business
45	Personal ads
46	Jobs—recreational
47	Business
48	Personal ads
49	Jobs—recreational
50	Business



### Stack in Vermont: Sun Boxes in Vermont State Parks, Artie Ong

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THU. JULY 19

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7

## SATURDAY 14

### Scene and Heard

Part 80s pop/lo-fi/alt rock and downright catchy lyrics, Philadelphia's *C. Shekar and Scaryone* are "the poster children for the new wave of modern indie rock," writes the Washington Post. Four days after the release of their self-titled album, the art rock band plays a Sagamore Kitchen show with Scott Avioli and Kristen Dowd.

**SEE MUSIC  
SCHEDULE ON  
PAGE 60**



③

### ONGOING

### Heavy Metal

Even if you don't frequent art galleries, you're probably already familiar with *Barbican*'s annual festival of The Venice Art & Metal exhibition, which this year is upped by showcasing natural and man-made landscapes — currently at Impressionism on Church Street and in Burlington City Hall Park. Inside the BCA Design Center works shed light on the LA-based artist

Keiji Maekawa's work.

**SEE ART REVIEW ON PAGE 62**

David L. Sanger © David L. Sanger

④

## WEDNESDAY 11

### Country Strong

It's always Country Girl! For more than 10 years, *Charley Crockett* has been touring country in his boy-looking uniforms and rousing, belted looks — until she "wants them" — intensity and cutting edge. "Kings," says legend Bonnie Raitt, "at the Higher Ground" (Shrine Auditorium).

**SEE CALENDAR LISTINGS ON PAGE 60**

⑤

## SATURDAY 14

### Getting the Scoop

Run 33 miles. Run 74 of them. Run some more. That's the motto for Burlington's *Burns Present 20*, which features relay extreme cycling and extreme sporting goals: If you just can't kick it, do the fun runs and have the sweetest. For later — you'll be supporting Vermont non-profit People Helping People Global at their way.

**SEE CALENDAR LISTINGS ON PAGE 60**

⑥

## SATURDAY 14 & SUNDAY 15

### Grand Isles

Island gettin' up? You didn't need a passport to escape to Vermont's own archipelago. This weekend's *Discover the Heart of the Islands Open Farm & Studio Tour* visits the island agriculture of the Champlain Islands on the map. Two-wheel your way through the farms of Saturday's *Islands Take Your* event on Sunday for another *Heart of the Islands*.

**SEE CALENDAR LISTINGS ON PAGES 60 AND 61**

⑦

## SATURDAY 14 & SUNDAY 15

### Folk Lure

Music festival celebrations reach a full three weeks from July 14, which marks the anniversary birthday of a original American folk legend. Bruce Springsteen's *The Legend: This Land!* The House, Life & Times of Americana's Burdened Patriarch

which Bruce bathes in music by Bruce Springsteen, Doc Watson, Bertie Higgins, LaLle Gutter and others.

**SEE CALENDAR LISTINGS ON PAGE 61**

everything else...

**CALENDAR** — P42

**CLASSES** — P52

**MUSIC** — P54

**ART** — P52

**MOTES** — P58

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## Holy Cash, Batman!

**W**hen Sen. **BERNIE LEARY** shows up at **Warner Bros.**' **Mystic 10 Cinema** on Sunday to view his career appearance in the new **Batman** film, he'll be joined by a few of his business peers. **Leary**, that is.

Accompanying him will be **DARIN MEYER**, the movie company's chairman and CEO; **KEVIN MULHARA**, the president of its local entertainment group; and **CAROL MULHARA**, chief lobbyist for parent company **Tower** Warner.

The special screening, which is a fundraiser for two of Leary's favorite nonprofits — Montpelier's Kellogg Hubbard Library and the ECHO Leary Center for Lake Champlain — is just the latest example of the long-existing relationship between the senator and the media mogul media corporation.

During the six-year election cycle leading up to Leary's 2008 reelection, Tower Warner was the second-largest donor to his campaign and political action committee, according to OpenSecrets.org. The company and its employees paid up \$40,000 to the senator — more than in any other election. **Meyer** himself has donated at least \$25,000 over to Leary over the years.

Tower Warner's subsidiary Warner Bros. has cast the caped crusader opposite in four films — from 1995's *Batman Returns* to the "brand-new" *The Dark Knight Rises*. According to a Leary staffer, Warner Bros. paid the senator \$10,000 in royalties over the years, all of which he donates to Kellogg Hubbard, his hometown library. A 2008 *Montpelier* screening of *The Dark Knight* raised nearly \$100,000 for the library, which named a wing after Leary.

To **Bill ALLISON**, editorial director at the Washington, D.C.-based Sunlight Foundation, a nonpartisan government watchdog group, Leary's relationship with Tower Warner is "troubling."

"I think that what several interests look for is access to politicians," he says. "Clearly he's a big contributor to Leary, and he's earned water for the industry. It's no surprise that of 100 senators, they picked him to be in the film."

Leary spokesman **DANIEL CABLE** has a far less sanguine explanation: "Warren's connection to Warner is a great thing that spans many years. The business character has been one of Senator Leary's lifelong passions, and it has spurred and energized an enduring bond to Vermont," he said in a statement.

Why on earth would Tower Warner seek to cozy with Vermont's senior senator? As chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Leary has tremendous

influence over federal copyright law — a field of increasing importance to the television, movie and recording industries, which collectively give Leary and his PAC \$522,600 between 2008 and 2010.

Last spring, Leary introduced the **Protect IP Act**, a controversial bill that would prevent American search engines from sending traffic to sites distributing stolen or bootlegged goods. According to its liberal群 Maureen for America, *Tower* Warner spent \$62,500 lobbying for the passage of that bill and its House counterpart in the last quarter of 2011 alone, along with another \$100,000-\$300,000 on a broader range of issues tackling the legislation.

**IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT IT'S SENATOR LEARY'S ACTING SKILLS ALONE THAT HAVE EARNED HIM HIS RECURRING ROLES IN THESE MOVIES.**

CRAIG AARON

After an internet industry spearheaded outcry over the bill prompted President Obama to withdraw his support for it, *Warren* the Warner Bros. head, told the *New York Times* he was "very disappointed" that the White House "brought into all that house that has been created."

"It's important that we register both in the administration and in Congress that it's important to the industry and to the job it supports," **Meyer** adds.

**OMAR AHMED**, the president and CEO of **Iron Circus**, a "art advocacy" advocacy group that fought the **Protect IP Act**, told *AOL* in a statement he doesn't think Leary's cutting was coincidental.

"It seems unlikely that it's Sen. Leary's acting skills alone that have earned him recurring roles in these movies," Ahmed said. "We've seen the power that giant companies like Hollywood studios have to influence and buy legislation, and that is just another and big high-profile example of that."

Leary has long argued that, as a former prosecutor, his support for the **Protect IP Act** stems from a desire to clamp down on international theft of intellectual property. According to *Leary*'s own words, his IP copyright infringement costs \$1.3 billion to lost wages annually. An aide said the

bill took five years to research and write. Leary filmed the *West* *Batman* movie late last summer.

"He has close working relationships with lots of businesses and like *Vermonters*, they agree with him on many things but also have areas of disagreement," Cagle said.

*Warren* spokesman **PETER MCNAUL** wouldn't say directly whether his company was making a alliance with the senator, but said in a statement: "Senator Leary has a history of supporting an iconic role in the *Warren* franchise dating back to 1995," noting that the work his benefited charitable organizations.

But according to *Aaron*, just because a member of Congress can't reap a personal financial benefit from such an arrangement, it still counts as influence peddling.

"Politicians have an awful lot of power," he says. "One way to get closer to a member is to give money to his favorite charity. There's all sorts of ways that a special interest can ingratiate themselves with a member of Congress, and giving to a favorite charity is one of them."

As to whether Leary simply happened to have a preexisting relationship with well-known *Warren* Allisons, *Aaron* says flatly: "Explanation doesn't cut it."

"If you know somebody in or love with one of your properties, that's what you're going to offer to them," he says. "If they know to lend their driving permit, they'd get *Warren* in ten-drive — not lamborghinis."

Or maybe flatmobiles.

### Union Made?

There's a new way to watch — the Democratic convention for attorney general — has been check-full of endorsements from former governors, former law-enforcement officials and state senators.

For a low-profile, late-August primary, it's getting bodies to the polls that really counts. And that's where endorsements from the state's labor unions may make a difference.

Thus far, Chittenden County State's Attorney **TY DOWNEY** has run the table on incumbent AG **SPENCER KORNACKI**, in locking up support from organized labor. He's garnered nods from the Vermont State Employees' Association, the Professional Firefighters of Vermont, the Vermont Building and Construction Trades Council, the Vermont AFL-CIO, the Vermont Teachers Association and the Vermont Sheriff's Association.

All told, Downey's campaign says,

membership of those unions totals 15,000 — a significant number in an election that could draw just 40,000 Democrats to the polls.

How did Donovan wrangle Labor's support from a 15-year-stalemate Democrat? According to several union sources, it was sheer tact.

"I've been lobbying in Montpelier for well over 30 years, and I can't recall the attorney general reaching out to organized labor in the state. I think, ever," says **MATT WIGG**, president of the firefighters union. "It's had an opportunity for many years to go to the podium and say, 'We with you.' He hasn't had a consistent base, so he hasn't had to work as hard."

**MICHAEL**, president of the state troopers union, admits the agency's ambivalence, noting, "We've never really in the time I've been an office had a relationship with him at all."

Worse yet, says **VICKI**, president of **VSRA**, where former governor **JIM DOWDLESS** sought re-election as state senator, "John [Dodd] failed to come to state workers' defense."

"There were numerous instances when we brought cases to [the attorney general] that we felt were not going to meet court savings, and the [attorney general] did not sit on those requests," Vickie says.

The way Sornell's camp sees it, though, the ADA was simply doing his job: applying the law. Both sides do damage.

"The attorney general's job part of it, is that he has to represent the state and its state employees bring a suit. That kind of sets up some conflict already," says Sornell spokesman **TAYLOR HATCH**. "I'd say the attorney general is tasked with enforcing the law, and there's never going to be an agreement on that, but Attorney General Sornell has done his best to reduce the law without any thought of political advantage."

Point taken. But rule No. 1 of politics: Don't piss off the log-rollers who might march alongside you in next year's parade.

For instance, in December 2009 Sornell released a report calling out charitable groups that he said overspent professional fundraisers for their services. Two of the biggest accusers he cited: the journalists in the police and firefighters unions.

Vickie says her union was "very unhappy" with the way it was portrayed, noting that it was a fierce, though not a primary, one, as decided to go with Sornell.

Some defend Sornell. "He hasn't had to be a politician. He hasn't had to worry about asking friends or relatives on the past. He's just had to do his job."

My how times change.

Do union endorsements really matter these days? To Vermont Republican Party chairman **JAKE LINDLEY**, not so much.

"The one union endorsement is an interesting name, but it's probably

something out of the '80s or '90s," he says. "Thought it's nice and you feel good about it, but I'm not sure what it translates to at the ballot box."

Republican **JAKE MCMILLAN**, who will face the winner of the Dem primary, has a more nuanced view, arguing that while union strength may not make a huge difference in the general election, it could influence August primary.

"Only the hard-core politically activated people will be showing up for it, I would imagine. So a union's ability to turn people out may still make a difference," he says.

Again, the state workers union heads say his outfit is planning to "touch" each of its 6,600 members three times — through phone banking, emails and direct mail — to encourage them to turn out for Donovan. The morally affiliated political action committee has donated \$20,000 to the campaign and may give more.

Even points to the crowded, five-way Democratic gubernatorial primary in 2010 as evidence of organized labor's might. In that race, his union, the AFL-CIO and the Vermont chapter of the National Education Association all endorsed **EDWARD BARONE**, who narrowly lost to Gov. **PETER SHIMMEL**.

"Dong, Racine was very much behind in the money game," he says. "I think the labor vote was huge with Racine and brought him within a few hundred votes of Shimmel."

**AMY SHIMMEL**, who ran Shimmel's campaign and now consults for Donovan, agrees noting that while campaigns can't coordinate directly with unions, the latter often appreciate the efforts of the former.

"We would go to public events like farmers markets, and we'd run into people and they'd say, 'You're a member of the VSRA and I got a call. I'm voting for you,'" she says of the 2010 race.

Shimmler argues that union support might matter as much or more in that race as in 2010 — especially given Sornell's name-recognition advantage over Donovan.

"I'd want people to know about how, and the more people that are talking with other how great [Sornell] is, the better off he's going to be," he says. "Even if 10 percent of them are talking to people, that can make a big impact." □

## POLITICS



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## Sharon Bushor, Burlington's Hardest-Working City Councilor, Is Asking All the Right Questions

BY KEVIN J. KELLEY

**S**usan Faley Bushor, the longest-serving member of the Burlington City Council, espouses what could be called the "tickle-up theory" of political change: "What we do here affects Washington, just as what Washington does obviously affects us," Bushor reasons.

Similarly, the life and career of this political independent can be seen as reflecting not only Burlington's political progression but also the evolution of American society during the past three decades.

Bushor, 66, first won election to the council 25 years ago as a representative of Ward 1, which encompasses and borders the University of Vermont campus. No one in living memory has

exceeded her length of tenure. And she isn't done yet. Over a grand breakfast at Winston's Steakhouse, Bushor & Co., Bushor revealed she'll seek a 12th term next year.

As Bushor sees it, there's more work to be done. She wants the University of Vermont to do more to address noise from students living off-campus in Ward 1 — a regular complaint from Bushor's constituents. She wants the university to build more housing, enough to accommodate 20 percent of its 10,000 undergraduates, with the scheduled opening of the Reliance Lofts this fall. 60 percent of students will be living on campus.

Throughout her quarter century of council service, the diminutive and

new-white-haired councilor has tenaciously maintained her non-party status. At times, it has made her a swing vote on a fiercely factionalized council. Bushor's constituents appear to tolerate her autonomy and make it official every two years in the polls.

"She takes points based on her own thinking, even if her wards are antagonistic," says Richard Ellsworth, a longtime member of the West 1 Neighborhood Planning Assembly. "Sharon's involvement in the NPA is total, and she's much appreciated for it."

Ed Adams, a Bushor's Ward 1 teammate and formerly her electoral opponent, takes a critical view of her political style, but expresses respect for Bushor's enlightened standing. "I give her a lot of

credit for sticking it out as an independent," Adams says.

Bushor has paid a price for that stick-to-itiveness — in the form of foregone political opportunities.

In 2008, Progressive Party leaders asked Bushor, whose views are often aligned with theirs, whether she'd consider running for mayor. They were seeking a candidate to succeed Peter Clavelle, who was stepping down after seven terms.

"Yes, Bushor said, she was interested. OSL party members told her, 'but you've got to run as a Progressive.'

"Thankfully, the independent responded, but no thanks."

What accounts for Bushor's persistent streak? Her parents, for one thing:

"I bet you haven't interviewed many politicians whose father was a chauffeur," Bushor suggests at Independence Day at Stewards. For decades, Daniel Foley drove for the members of a "very affluent" Republican family, and he married the daughter of the president on that family's Massachusetts estate, she recounts.

"He called himself an independent because he said it was important to focus on each issue in its own light," she explains. "He also said that sometimes you'll agree with one side, sometimes with the other."

Bushor's father left the house of clergymen soon after. "I came from no money," she's quick to point out. That background led her to "try to represent the people who are strapped and struggling." Recently, for example, Bushor objected to Mayor Mike Weisberger's proposed 5% increase in the fee for after-school programs. The low-income Burlingtonians asked to pay the modest increase "didn't benefit when students were going up, and they're certainly not benefiting now, particularly if they've lost jobs," Bushor commented.

Her own financial insecurity caused Bushor had to work to pay her tuition at UVM, where she enrolled in 1994 on the advice of a cousin studying medicine there. As a girl who was "good at science," Bushor wanted to become a doctor, but settled for a job as a medical technician at Fletcher Allen. "It was a profession women were in," Bushor notes, adding that UVM officials discouraged her in the mid-'70s from applying to med school because of her gender, which was much on display at the time. She was pregnant with the first of her two children.

Bushor says she remained apolitical throughout her college days in the '90s and for the next several years, as well. "My world was Fletcher Allen and my children," she recalls. Even Bernice Sanders' successful emergent campaign for mayor in 1984 didn't slightly stir things up.

Gradually, though, Bushor did become a civic activist, motivated in part by the fear of nuclear war that unsettled many Americans in the early '90s. "I figured that there wasn't much I could do about it as an individual, but at least I didn't have to be a passive

victim," she explains. Locally, she got involved by "the energy that came oozing in" with Sanders. "It was hard to be in Burlington in those days and not be engaged," Bushor recounts. "The people around Bernie were some of the brightest I've ever seen."

Bushor got appointed as a posse on the Traffic Commission, since renamed the Traffic and Public Works Commission. That move annoyed her now-ex-husband Beau Bushor, she recalls, "because I don't have any sense of direction."

One day, Mayor Sanders called inquiring about her stand on the Southern Commissar; she'd also championed Parley. Bushor can't remember what she said, but the stormy socialist "started yelling at me," she recalls. Sanders made her feel "completely annihilated," Bushor says, although she did find the courage to call him off the next day to request a face-to-face meeting.

At one point, during what proved to be a "cordial" follow-up conversation, the mayor asked her, "Where do you see yourself in 20 years?"

"Working in your tent," the newly leavened feminist replied. It actually took Bushor longer than 10 years to make her bid for city hall's corner office. She decided to challenge Clavelle's bid for a third term in 1999. She sought the *Prog*'s endorsement, but it became evident, Bushor says, that "it had more support from non-Progressives than from the Progressives." Behind-the-scenes politicking led her to the road to nominate Clavelle at the Prog convention.

By then, the formerly apolitical Bushor had become a passionate pol. "It's seductive," she confesses, listing her experiences to that of the characters played by Meryl Streep and Alan Alda in the 1979 film *The Seduction of the Devil*, who are seduced not by sexual sweet talk but by political wheeling.

Bushor clearly relishes the role she's played for the past quarter century — and she's certainly not in it for the money. City councilors are paid \$3,000 a year for 10 job, or, for her case, consume at least 20 hours a week. In addition to the 40 hours she spends working in the Fletcher Allen blood lab, Agape free time reserved for tending to her community garden plot, she schedules

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# LOCALmatters

## Sharon Bushor ■■■

"doesn't leave much time for Sharon," the launcest.

No one carries out a councillor's duties more conscientiously than Bushor. "She immerses herself in details," says Bill Kroug, who served alongside Bushor for 16 years — three of them as council president. "She studies all the documents and brings up items the council might otherwise miss."

Her diligence was on display at a recent meeting at which Bushor carefully analyzed a seemingly obscure issue indirectly related to Weinberger's city budget package. That lengthy exercise appeared to be the patience of at least a couple of her colleagues. "She comments on almost every motion before the council," Kroug says. "She sometimes thinks out loud, and was often the only member of the council who challenged the five-minute limit on speaking."

Aided by that proved annoying to more lenient councillors, Kroug suggests that "yoga" would be a more tactful word choice. For her part, Bushor casually admits to being plagued by "verbal diarrhea."

At the same time, most of the councillors grouped in the conservative formation in Burlington City Hall Auditorium appear to value Bushor for the encyclopedic memory that she brings to council discussions. "I have a knowledge of the past that no one can help us avoid going down dead ends," she says. And it was required not by mandate but through focused

study. "You've got to do the homework," Bushor says. "You've really got to do the homework."

Her generally cordial relations with local politicians, some of whom can be pretty prickly, are facilitated by the fairness and open-mindedness Bushor exhibited during her own four-year stint as council president. She says she learned from women with whom she collaborated on a phase book in the title that "you shouldn't only fight the opposition; you should try to understand the opposition."

That approach has enabled her to get

accessibility issues high on the agenda throughout her career, she says, along her efforts to make Salmon Lake Park more welcoming to visitors in wheelchairs. She also points with pride to the addition of a footpath and bike path to Riverside Avenue.

Aided to specify a council role that stands out, Bushor picks one from 2010 on which she ticked with then-cmayor Bob Kiss. Bushor was one of only two councillors — with Progressive Emma MacIsaac-Stankic — to oppose an electricity contract that it would be harmful

to ratepayers. "Mike [Kiss] is bright he knows what he's trying to find his voice."

Even after so many years on the council, Bushor sometimes seems to be searching for her own voice. Kroug reflects, for example, that "Sharon was very conflicted about Kier's handling of BT. She was trying to work it out, looking for clear answers to a problem that didn't have them."

Ed Adrien says he'd prefer "a more decisive style" from Ward 1 council colleague. "I don't necessarily need to hear someone's thought process or many nuances that come before the council." As an example of Bushor's vacillating, Adrien offers the example of her shifting stand on the proposed buying of the F-35 stealth fighters at Burlington airport. "She was behind it, behind it, behind it, then suddenly she voted against it."

Neighborhood Planning Assembly steering committee member Hilary Bushor has a different view of Bushor's occasionally Hitlerlike equivocating. "Yes, she can come down on both sides of a problem, but it's refreshing for her neighborhood constituents to hear their elected representative going through a reassessment." Bushor's vote against the F-35 was salient, Hilary suggests, by "the advocacy of money in the community." And he wants to know: "What's wrong with a politician changing her position in response to the views of her constituents?"

It might qualify as another example of Bushor's "tickle-up" politics. ☀

## SHE STUDIES ALL THE DOCUMENTS AND BRINGS UP ITEMS THE COUNCIL MIGHT OTHERWISE MISS.

BILL KROUG

along with each of the four mayors who preceded Weinberger.

Republican Peter Brewster, who interrupted the Prog era for one term in the mid-'90s, "wanted to prevent everything," Bushor recalls, but he also helped the city a lot by passing on its move on [information technology]."

Bushor also has fond recollections of two other Burlington Republicans of long ago: Fred Bailey, who served as council president in the mid-'80s and now holds a senior post at ClioCorp in New York, and the late Alan Goss, who used a wheelchair when he was a city councillor. His disability motivated Bushor and her colleagues to use clear of unnecessary watering holes after city council meetings.

to native peoples in northern Canada. "We put the Earth ahead of ourselves," Bushor says. "It's something we need to be doing more of now."

Bushor describes the erstwhile mayor as "a good friend" and notes he compiled a positive record during his first term, 2005–2008, for which "he doesn't get credit now." Adding that she's tired of talking about the mismanagement of Burlington Telecom, she does acknowledge that "Bob tried on the last [fifteen] a polarized and it didn't fit." Kier left holding, in his or her estimation, is that "she's a good communicator."

What about Weinberger? She's enthusiastic in her early assessment, labeling the new mayor to "a vessel moving in an uncertain direction in uncharted

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## Solar Flare-Up: Six in Charlotte Fight the Power

BY KATHRYN FLAGG

**W**ind turbines are enormous and disrupt fragile ecosystems. Wood-fired biomass plants gobble up forests and belch out particulate pollution. So say opponents of these controversial sources of renewable energy.

But solar? What's not to like about enormous-sounding panels that are increasingly popping up on rooftops — and in sunny fields — across Vermont?

Ask the residents of East Charlotte, some of whom are fighting the Charlotte Solar Farm proposed for a 4-acre field off Blenheim Road. Citing concerns about "view sheds" and property values, opponents in the energy development say the project conflicts with the rural character of their neighborhood. They say Charlotte's move is a "public good" and that the solar project isn't in keeping with the town's thoughtful long-term zoning regulations — a charge consistent with the planning commission's own strongly worded statement of objection to the development.

In previous cases, adjoining landowners have reached settlements with developers, or independently opposed the developments to the state Public Service Board, which ultimately decides which energy projects go where. But in this case, six Charlotte residents have organized, pooled resources and hired attorney William Ellis and landscape architect David Rappaport to pursue their case in hearings before the PSC.

It suggests that solar can be just as objectionable to neighbors as wind or biomass — at least in Charlotte, which has gone to greater lengths than most towns to preserve its picturesque appearance. In 1996, the town raised taxes by 2 cents to fund conservation projects. Unlike its neighbors to the north and south, Charlotte also conscientiously

blocked commercial development along the Route 7 strip.

Steve Colvin, who lives adjacent to the field, notes the solar array's 25-acre footprint would be equivalent to 2000 parked cars, 18 football fields or the parking lot at Home Depot in Williston.

He, too, is poised to sue up the route now, in hopes of getting compensation, he says.

In energy-hungry Chittenden County, it makes "perfect sense," Rausenwald says.

"You can't hide a project of that size, that's close," he admits. But he says that

is contributing to the solar-farm fight because she's tired that towns such as Charlotte exert so little control over what it wants up.

"There's a certain feeling in Vermont that we should all be on board" with renewable energy, Bassett says, which the committee takes it hard for some officials in Charlotte to speak up against the project. Bassett doesn't trust him and his solar panels at her home, which is about a mile from the field but she feels the Charlotte Solar Farm developers are raising "neighborhood" over the welfare of the neighbors, and the town.

Projects regulated by the Public Service Board are technically exempt from local zoning regulations, but the body is supposed to consider "lower plant" in its deliberations. Charlotte last updated its solar plan in 2008, and its law on solar zoning regulations in 2010 — and at the time, Black says, "a project of this type wasn't really on the radar."

As it stands, the document doesn't explicitly forbid the construction of a solar farm on "ruralways." Nor does it officially designate the parcel for future development as "the village of East Charlotte" — something the town has considered previously and which some residents think would be a better use of the land.

Craig Speer, who owns Speer's Corner Store in East Charlotte, says he's come to believe that the land should be a site for future housing. "It's not in my backyard, but it's in my neighborhood," Speer says. Solar, he argues, "does nothing for the village of East Charlotte."

As Charlotte continues to review its own plan — a process now under way — Black imagines that more unequivocal language about future development will find its way into the next version. In general, Black says, the town is supportive of renewable energy. Would it be overly restrictive to ban projects like the



"This massive commercial facility has no business where it's being proposed," says Colvin, one of the group of six whose property is in a charming yellow farmhouse on Blenheim Road since 2007. "We're different than if someone were to put Wal-Mart behind our house."

It changes the whole view ... I think this forever changes the character of this little corner of Charlotte."

The Charlotte solar farm would be located about a half mile west of the intersection of Blenheim Road and Spear Street. The narrow end of the rectangular, tree-lined pasture butts up to the road; blank, if you're staring down Hinesburg Road at a clip, and you might miss it.

The property is owned by the trust of Clark Household Jr., whose son, Clark Household III, is working with an out-of-state developer — Massachusetts-based American Capital Energy — to build the solar project. Andy Rausenwald, the attorney representing the developer, says the site is ideal. The south-facing

on the whole that project wouldn't be "highly visible" — and promises that appropriate landscaping after construction would "soften" the view.

The field is zoned rural, which owner planner Dean Block says usually calls for a mix of agricultural and residential land; the solar farm is considered a "commercial" use. The 22-megawatt project would consist of roughly 8500 panels — twice the size of the solar array located off Route 7 in Ferrisburgh. Although the original plan put the solar array as close as 10 yards from Colvin's house, a subsequent agreement between the developer and the town of Charlotte pushed the project further away in the soil.

The town part of that "agreement"? To stay out of the PSC proceedings, which solicitors estimated could cost the town as much as \$60,000. Solictors had already lined up about \$10,000 for legal fees and a landscape consultant's work.

Charlotte resident Elizabeth Bassett

## ENVIRONMENT

Charlotte Solar Farm to seek award for light commercial development.

"We haven't quite figured that out yet," Block admits, but it's difficult to write protective rules in advance —

— anticipated future development — the exact size, scope and location of which are nearly impossible to predict.

The Charlotte Solar Farm is being proposed under a state-subsidy program known as SPEED — the Sustainable Energy Enterprise Development Plan. The legislature enacted the program to encourage the development of new renewable power sources, which lawmakers hope will constitute 20 percent of Vermont's electric retail sales by 2037. The seven-year-old program guarantees renewable power producers higher prices for the electricity they

### SIX CHARLOTTE RESIDENTS HAVE ORGANIZED, POOLED RESOURCES AND HIRED AN ATTORNEY AND A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT TO MAKE THEIR CASE IN HEARINGS BEFORE THE STATE PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD.

generate — and long-term contracts — for projects up to 12 megawatts in size.

The incentive has worked well — so well, in fact, that the state had to set a lottery to determine which project would be built. The Charlotte Solar Farm ended up on the winning list, but secured approval after some other proposed projects failed. The SPEED designation will guarantee a retail energy price of 24 cents per kilowatt-hour — about 10 cents higher than market rate — but relocating to a different site or parent, as neighbors would prefer, isn't allowed under the program.

The PSC will likely decide later this summer whether to award a certificate of public good that would allow construction to move forward. It has already approved at least a half-dozen solar projects of a similar size throughout the state. ☐



Blakewood, the mayor said at a City Hall Park press conference. Blakewood, a partner in the Hinesburg firm of Kahn Roth Blakewood & Dunn, would be the first woman to serve as Burlington city attorney.

Hick Coward and his wife, mental health counselor Lynn Gopstein, were also among the first couples to be joined in a Vermont civil union in 2000.

Weinberger withdrew his first nomination for city attorney, Ian Carlson, after several commissioners criticized the new mayor's proposal to pay Carlson \$70,000 more than the salary scale permits. ☐

### Weinberger Names Blackwood City Attorney

By JENNIFER MELBY

Burlington Mayor Milt Weinberger's last pick for city attorney ended up dry, but his new nominee appears likely to win confirmation when the Burlington City Council meets on July 30.

On Monday, Weinberger announced Robert Blakewood, a former president of the Vermont Bar Association and for many years the principal of a Burlington law firm, to replace outgoing attorney Ken Schatz as the city's top lawyer.

This time, Weinberger gave prior notice of his pick to city councilors, who had "a very positive response" to



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# STATE of THE arts

## Two Music Presenters Get It Together for a Classical Collaboration

BY AMY LILLY

**M**enging a financially Monet Toized but smaller, financially lessor, and without the weather problem. That's the idea behind a new collaboration between **HELEN KAPLAN**, founder of the scene Vermont festival that ended in 2010 after 27 iterations, and **MICHAEL BERNSTEIN**, who co-founded the **BURLINGTON ENSEMBLE**, now in its third year.

The pair is offering two consecutive weeks of nearly daily, high-quality classical-music concerts during the second half of July. Kaplan's five-concert Vermont Summer Music Festival occurs during the third week of the month, and the seven concerts of Bernstein's Burlington Ensemble Summer Series are packed into the fourth week. At most of the concerts, each mixer will be able, once again, to picnic or witness long associated with the Monet Fest, including Chittenden Farms and Shores' Trapp Meadow. Then they'll move to the Coach Barn, Trapp Family Lodge, and other indoor locales to hear the music.

Kaplan's name convened here in Charlotte, the man explains how the collaboration came about. Dabrowski, a violinist, began playing Monet Fest concerts in 2006, a year after he moved to Vermont from a sparsely populated town to update New York. There he had run the Adirondack Esplanade for 10 years.

"When I played with Mel [at these concerts]," Dabrowski recalls, "I was just in love with his idea. The audiences were so huge, and a lot of dollars were generated through raffles. I thought it was a brilliant idea."

Dabrowski also began mixing with Kaplan's New York Chamber Soloists Orchestra, the group that formed the core of the Monet Festival performers, in which Kaplan has long participated.

When the festival ended in December 2010, and without an audience or financial desire to see my next lecture, Dabrowski, who has "studied the box filters," has concluded that too much money went to administrative costs. Kaplan adds that the small, full-color brochure mailed to numerous residences was an unnecessary cost in itself, and unusually bad weather during the festival's last few



THE KAPLANS, LEFT, AND MICHAEL BERNSTEIN

years hurt ticket sales.

What both musicians say they worried about most was the cultural loss to Vermonters. In the fest's wake, says Dabrowski, he and Kaplan "started to talk a lot about how the community is really going to miss out."

So last year, they each launched initiatives. The difference this year is that the two scheduled them back-to-back to create two continuous weeks of concerts

already has an extensive email list from his work with that much-far-beyond classical-music regulars. The chamber group donates most of its profits to local charities, but advertising on the charter's combined email lists and social-media sites — a path to financial sustainability that Dabrowski hopes will become a new model for classical groups.

Kaplan's strength is in his extensive music-world contacts. The above studi-

o Kaplan's contacts outside the music world are impressive, too. His old friend Robert Haas, the long-time wine importer and vintner, will present a Bach-Berlioz-Brahms concert at Basin Harbor Club in Vermont with a talk about wine. Samples will be served along with picnic boxes prepared and sold by the Club.

Bernstein's Big Summer Sessions draw more on local talent, like the violinist, including Kaplan's own nephews, son, piano

**MICHAEL KAPLAN** That focus is part of BE's effort to "make music with a real musical." The summer festival makes

money to fund the group's 90/10 concerts during the year, which support local nonprofits and boost the local economy.

"Nobody's going to be a millionaire from this," Dabrowski says with a chuckle. But with his business acumen and Kaplan's contacts, the new take on Vermont's old Monet Fest just might have staying power. ☐

## WE COULD BE COMPETING WITH EACH OTHER AND INSTEAD WE'RE TRYING TO HELP EACH OTHER.

nearly the length of the three-week Monet fests. And instead of spending on marketing and brackets, each emailed his contact list the full schedule of both week's concerts.

"We could be competing with each other, and instead we're trying to help each other," says Kaplan. Why ticket sales typically covering only 60 percent of studio costs, and given Vermont's small pool of classical-music donors, he adds, collaboration is crucial.

The men's strongest complement each other. Dabrowski, as unpronounced about business as he is about music,

at Jefferson and then taught there for three decades, after which he began representing other musicians through his agency, Marilyn Kaplan Inc. (She's also raised \$10 million to Vermont from New York City in 1980.) For the Vermont Summer Music Festival, he has recruited both Rachel Barton Pine, a violinist whose Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center concert is the one Dabrowski most looks forward to, and the renowned pianist Menahem Pressler.

"There's none of the things I love about Mel. He finds and manages that unstringing series," comments Dabrowski.

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## History Repeating

**Book review:** *The Sandcastle Girls*  
by Chris Bohjalian

BY MARGOT HARRISON

**H**ow who participate in a genocide as well as those who merely look away rarely volunteer much in the way of "recollection or observation," writes Chris Bohjalian in his 15th book, *The Sandcastle Girls*. "Stories with the heroic and righteous usually fit only the narratives we speak — and often they don't want to talk much about it either."

For someone to talk a good genocide — or not letting it be forgotten. Stories of horrific accounts, visual records and representations as literature and film have helped cement our collective memory of the Holocaust. Not so many modern Americans are familiar with the Ottoman-Turkish government's massacre of as many as a million and a half Armenians in 1915. Bohjalian's narrator calls it "The Slaughter You Know Next To Nothing About."

The narrative, Lusine Petrossian, is (like Bohjalian) a present-day American novelist of Armenian ancestry. Although Lusine remembers her grandmother planning the end, and knows he died, Turkey in World War I, the specifics of that era seem distant to her in a movie epic. They certainly didn't stop her; she moves, from dating a Turkish American boy in high school,

to naively wanting her grandmother, Boğazlıyan suggests, it's up to the survivors' descendants to talk about genocide, even if that means using fiction to weave fragmentary records into a tapestry of horrors.

Bohjalian's novel is also Lusine's novel, framed by her frequent writerly interventions. It's a dinky story and a love story. Having introduced her grandparents as she remembers them from her childhood — a prosperous pair at mid-century — Lusine backs into what to do as how they were.

Here, Bohjalian switches from first person to a third-person, present-tense

narrative (which alternates with Lusine's voice within each chapter). We meet Rashaad Radouan, a privileged Bostonian who travels to Aleppo, Syria, with her father as part of the Friends of Armenia, an organization forced to aid refugees. She soon learns that Aleppo is merely a way station on a forced march south that, for most of these Armenian women and children, will end in starvation. (Their men are already dead.) The American mission as Bond-Add applied to a genocidal wound.

From the first scene in Aleppo, where Rashaad observes the refugees marching into a square (see sidebar), it's clear that personal memory can be no more than a footnote to this catastrophe. Yet the historians decide what she can — and, along the way, falls in love with a young Armenian engineer who is en route to join the British army. For his part, Armenia Petrossian is separated from the very-bitter Armenian but haunted by memories of her wife and infant daughter, both present dead.

Because we know that Armen and Elizabeth are Lusine's grandparents, their separation creates no real suspense — even when Armen finds himself on the treacherous, ledging fields of Gallipoli. But Bohjalian moves in and out of the perspective of a gallery of characters, some of whom cause us more active sympathy. Among them are two German soldiers who risk their lives to document their Turkish allies' marches on film. The men compelling us is a pair of survivors whose Elizabeth manages to care for by sheltering them in the American embassy: a young woman named Nevar, and the "unfeminile" girl to whom she has become a substitute mother, Hikmet.

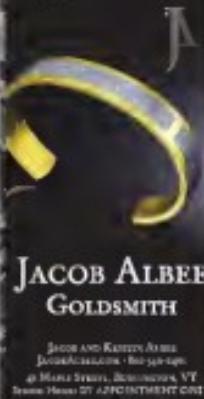
The recollections of Nevar and Hikmet — who watched her mother and older sister die in the desert — are at once in the

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The Sandcastle Girls by Chris Bohjalian  
Reviewed by Margot Harrison

Reviewed by Margot Harrison



**"REASONABLE OBEDIENCE"** ©2008 by Gene Luen Yang and the Center for Cartoon Studies. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission from the author and illustrator. *Reasonable Obedience* is a graphic novel for children ages 8-12. It is the first book in a series of three. The second book in the series, *Reasonable Resistance*, will be published in 2009. The third book in the series, *Reasonable Revolt*, will be published in 2010. The books are available at www.drawnpluspaneled.com.



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# STATE OF THEARTS

## History Repeating

never gets to the immediate wins and acts of mass slaughter. If *The Sandcastle Girls* were about the Holocaust, it would take place in the camps — and, in that case, it's a greater genocide, used than eaten.

But genocide can be devastating. By keeping the sexual killing offstage, so to speak, and presenting them as anomalies or secondhand accounts, Bohjalian makes a point. Camouflaging the atrocity of the slaughter of neighboring minority was prioritized to the Turks, who would then allow their allies to see them as an ascended masters nation.

But a related culture at the Germanic stages — even as the photographers, with somewhat laudable irony, contrast them a somber barbarism with their confined homeland. And memory persists in the transmuted mind of Hattusa, a transmuted holocaust reader with exemplary restraint. Young girls are often pivotal figures in his novels, and I have found some of these characters willed and precocious. But Hattusa, whose silent pictures speak volumes, emerges as the novel's most meekly ill-fated figure. (She's also the source of its title.) On the punishing march to Aleppo she and her friends make stand posts!

If anyone in the need is stirred, it's Lerner. (Such acts are to be the inevitable fate of author-surrogates.) While her narrative provides valuable context to readers unfamiliar with the Armenian genocide, it

serves the book down. And one issue remains unanswered: namely, the degree of post, known as Lerner takes in presenting her grandfather's story parts of which would fit right onto a Hollywood setpiece menu.

Granted, *The Sandcastle Girls* is not a novel about narrative verisimilitude in the vein of Atwood's *Laura*. It's merely a convenient framing-device for a historical fiction. (Bohjalian notes in an afterward that the Persians "most assuredly are not a loosely edited version of my grandfather's") Still, given that the author has chosen this device, it's impossible not to wonder how much of the story our fictional narrator has drawn directly from her grandfather's letters and journals and how much she has invented — particularly in her presentation of the tale's final twist.

Perhaps genocidal narratives from the point of view of the descendants will always resemble the romances of status quo a momentum — sober, classic and respectful. It's not for the Lerners to capture the agony of those who perished, but they can, in small ways, show how human dignity measured itself as the face of unthinkable brevities of the social contract. At the opening of the novel, Lerner reflects that Americans could benefit from a book called *The Armenian Genocide for Dummies*. Indeed, many of us could — but a drama like *Holocaust*, with as much to reveal legions of readers, may be far more valuable.

**SOMETIMES, BOHJALIAN SUGGESTS, IT'S UP TO THE SURVIVORS' DESCENDANTS TO TALK ABOUT GENOCIDE, EVEN IF THAT MEANS USING FICTION TO WEAVE FRAGMENTARY RECORDS INTO A TAPESTRY OF HORRORS.**

## FROM THE SANDCASTLE GIRLS

Approaching from another dozen or so a staggering variety of old stories and blueprints, it's impossible to observe that any African American, irrespective of the stories of the past, brings old drawings, the old laws of American law markets in the South from the 1940s and 1950s, through which these remain and had always existed — it's family legend! Their families had completely disappeared. And in the last long and slow through little and independently longer, had been the ones that had remained that their mothers were either, in fact, very inferior — and they are, in fact, racists

at. Many nights in her age on even a little younger all are legend mainly beyond caring. These stories have been passed down by the sun or stayed by the soil in which many have died, or in some cases, by great planning skills and strategies that have been left and removed these documents, introduced! The stories talk about dying and death as they further become losses, and the ones that have been lost are the ones that are present. She has never in her life seen a person in this and hundreds have in the name of God there have been no such support. Her story begins the test of the people. The bones of their past people lie here, too. The father is saying, but she does. She does,

## SHORT TAKES ON FILM: SPECIAL SCREENINGS GALORE

The **MUSEUM** is a state-of-the-art digital theater. Movies arrive there on hard drives, not reels. But this week, says co-owner **MICHAEL JAHN**, the staff is making a traditional film projector. Why? Christopher Nolan, director of

### THE DARK KNIGHT

JAHN wants his audience to screen the old fashioned way at a special event that will bring Sen.

**PATRICK LEAMY** and Warner brothers head honcho to the Weinstein multiples.

Leamy, a diehard fan, thinks it's the force behind this unlikely

overrunning of the anticipated blockbuster which takes place five days before its official U.S. release. The senator has a cameo in the movie having survived a nasty confrontation with the *Joker* in *THE DARK KNIGHT*.

The film was also pre-screened at the **CINERAMA** in Manhattan before it opened in July 2008. It went on to gross more than \$500 million domestically, which may explain why the screening of Nolan's third Batman movie has higher prices, more hoopla and, I think, "more excited" JAHN says.

Those \$100-and-up tickets will fund two institutions dear to Leamy's heart: Montpelier's **VERMONT HISTORICAL MUSEUM** and Burlington's **KING LACEY LIBRARY AND SCIENCE CENTER**. But don't expect it every year in next week's paper — press is banned from the screening.

If you're more invested in the great outdoors than in Gotham, you may want to check out the free, 50th-anniversary screening of a documentary called **BEAUTY IN THE BEAST**. "What happens when you put a lawyer, an Ivy grad and a city chick on the Appalachian Trail?" It's PRT material—aka Chicago-based director Katherine Ling and her pals out of college broodies and best friend hiked the 2003 miles and documented their plucky with cameras. They call it a "raw and unpolished look" that captures both the beauty and the psychological stress of the trip.

America is going crazy for roller derby again, as the sold-out casts of the **SEASIDE ROLLER DERBY VAMPIRES** attest. That national excitement is captured in a new documentary called **BESTIAL ROLLER DERBY**.

**REBELLION AND ROLL RASH**, narrated by Juliette Lewis, it's currently on the festival circuit, but you can see it next week at a screening hosted by the GMDD, with 50 percent of ticket sales funding their quest to ride the rails.

**MARSTON HARRISON**

**I** The Dark Knight has special screenings Sunday July 19, 7 p.m. at the Hippodrome 10-plex (adults \$10 and kids \$5) and may be purchased at **ETIX** and the Kidding Hub (adults \$10 by payment plan); **ETIX** (800) 448-7227. For more info or to buy online, go to [eckerdarts.org](http://eckerdarts.org).

**Beauty Beneath the Dirt**, Tuesday July 17, 7 p.m. at the Prince B. Cinema in South Burlington. Q&A with cast member Rosaline Imp follows. Regular admissions.

**Derby Day** (A Story of Love, Addiction and Risk Reckless), Thursday July 16, 7 p.m. at the Palace in Winooski or South Burlington, \$15, to be paid by the drawn Mountain Derby Dames.



Sen. Patrick Leahy and the *Joker* in the dark knight film

MICHAEL JAHN

ETIX

KING LACEY

ETIX

Dear Ced,

In a column a while back, you told your assistant Ute to "quit with the Wikipedia," because "from the standpoint of reliability, Wikipedia might as well be written by gorillas." The weekly science journal *Nature* reports Wikipedia contains less erroneous material than the Encyclopedie Britannica. Are you willing to withdraw your sensational claim?

Cordial



**Y**es, I'll withdraw it. From a reliability or any other standpoint, Wikipedia is considerably better than could be accomplished by gorillas. Put a gorilla in front of a keyboard and there's a good chance he'll crap on it. Few Wikipedia articles descend to this level. On the contrary, for sending her best, I'm gratifiedly curious to death to find, getting an initial fix on a serious research subject, Wikipedia is an indispensable resource. The problem is when even those who know better rely on Wikipedia as the last stop rather than the first in finding the facts.

For example, in a recent piece on Dutch architect René Koolhaas in the *New York Review of Books*, critic Morton Felder made several factual errors. When the architect complained, Felder responded

replied, "I am surprised that for someone so concerned about his image and the spread of misinformation, neither Koolhaas nor his office has bothered to correct his Wikipedia entry."

In other words, it's not my fault for relying on a fudgy source. It's your fault for not correcting any fudgy source. How's that for head-scratching?

Wikipedia is the premier example of the internet phenomenon known as crowdsourcing, in which people spontaneously cooperate for the greater good. By many measures it has become the world's leading reference resource, with 22 million articles in 265 languages, including four million articles in English.

According to the Alexa tracking service, Wikipedia is the sixth most visited website in the world. All articles are contributed voluntarily, who are free to knock up the contributions of everybody else. The enterprise is supported at some remove by the Wikimedia Foundation, which employs a staff of about 100. I get much of this from the Wikipedia article about Wikipedia, noting that if I submitted this column as a scholarly paper to any properly run institution of higher learning, I would get and deserve an F.

The question isn't whether Wikipedia is reliable. No one with a grasp of the situation contends it is, including colleague Jimmy Wales. Wales justly observes that serious researchers would be foolish to rely on any encyclopedia. My assistant

Lilith Rd once contributed articles to the Encyclopedia Britannica, which tells you a lot right there. Producing a compendium of human knowledge (eg, the one you're reading) is inherently messy. Given the staggering mass of what's knowable, any wikihedonist offers a hodge-podge of getting a real handle-on it. But the collective result is a rip sheet at best.

Not surprisingly, it's bad stuff. In 2006, *Nature* asked experts to compare articles on 42 topics at Wikipedia and Britannica and concluded... well, not that Wikipedia had "less erroneous material." Cordial, you're half-kidding. The magazine said, "the difference in accuracy was not particularly great." Each source had four serious errors. Britannica fired better on mean errors, with 133 versus 162 for Wikipedia. Alfonso Estanqueira editors felt that was a big difference. *Nature* evidently didn't.

But coming up mean errors misses the point. No doubt some Wikipedia articles are sterling examples of the encyclopedist's art; others not. The difficulty is, it's not always obvious which is which. The saving grace of Wikipedia in this respect is its often-wretched prose. If an article appears to have been translated from the Magyar by robots, even credulous readers won't take it so seriously.

The more serious concern is mindfully written crap. Writers for prestigious journals are sometimes taken in. The misinformation Martin Filler got was

inconsequential, but that's not always true, particularly in the case of controversial subjects. Note the long-running "hot war" over Wikipedia's global warming article, in which an expert on the subject spent months fending off恣意的 contributions by anonymous opponents.

OK, few world leaders look in Wikipedia for policy guidance. But on everyday matters, authentic-sounding nonsense can do realms. A 2008 study comparing the accuracy of drug information on Wikipedia and Merck's *Brand*. Wikipedia's answers were less complete, contained more errors of omission and provided no correct dosing information. (In fact, Wikipedia made fewer factual errors.)

This isn't to say nobody should use Wikipedia quite the contrary. At The Straight Dope, it's often the first thing we look at, first for a quick lit on subjects of interest and second to get cite for dependable sources. Providing a starting point for further investigation is all that noneditors Wikipedia editors aspire to accomplish.

Many Wikipedia articles are now wisely prefaced with warnings about dubious aspects of what lies below. Probably it would be helpful if all popularizers, including Wikipedia, Britannica and us at the Straight Dope, permanently embossed at the top of our pages **BELIEVE NOTHING YOU READ HERE. IT MAY ALL BE LIES.**

Is it better something reasonable goes straight? Ced Kramer can drive the straight line on any topic. Write to Ced at *ced@chicagoreader.com*, 312-226-2121 or visit [www.straightdope.com](http://www.straightdope.com).

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## Bad Night

**O**n a good night, a typical night, my work shift unfolds like a graceful dance performance. I glide through the city and its environs, effortlessly connecting with customers and traffic alike. I know just what to say and do in order to please even the most challenging individuals who pass through my car. As for the more common, engaging, lighthearted conversation and cheer shared throughout the night, An Evening with Hackie can make our hour carefree and enriched.

The other nights — which, thankfully, are few and far between — I feel like a bumbling who can't help but crash into the other dancers. Rather than click, I clunk. And that describes a recent Sunday night. With customers after customers, there seemed to be no meeting of the minds, just continued awkwardness, misunderstandings and strident conflict. I kept thinking: What was I getting this job for?

The first wave of malfeasance arrived at dusk as I was trudging the soft streets toward the elope of the Burlington Bike & Foot festival. This is a relatively new entry in the city's summer lineup of weird-and-wacky events, and it didn't give me what to expect. I was hoping that — it is the Vermont Brewers Festival — it would serve up yet another excuse for folks to get pathetically hammered, thereby generating waves of suddenly revellers in need of bus transport up the hill. Unfortunately, it wasn't because that these were dawdlers were not in ready or these were queasy quacquacapta. Bottom line: I was getting no tips.

Just as I was about to eat my dinner and commence a middle-aged man with two teenage girls loaded one from in front of the RE/MAX office. He asked, "How much to UVM and then to the Hampton Inn?"

"Does 20 bucks work for you?" I replied. "Yeah, that's fine," he agreed, and the

two girls got in the back while the man took a shot.

One girl was his daughter, the man explained, and the other — whom she had met just today — was going to be her momma for their upcoming fraternal year. That worked well, apparently.

"Well, take one of these," I instructed the girls as I recovered two business cards from my ring and passed them over my shoulder. "This going to be your cabbie for the next four years."

With some hesitancy, each girl took a card, clearly knowing quite what to think. It was just a flyby, anyway. Come September they would quickly learn of the free University of Vermont bus that takes

traveling probably hopped on the elopester. I considered talking to the front desk person to try and get the guy's room number — it being short — but dropped that idea when I saw the line at the desk. I returned to my cabdriving task, I am not 22.

My next fare was another sober-looking dude with long, graying blonde hair tied back in a prodigious ponytail. He said his wife were from West Brattleboro in central Vermont, and they were up here for a week-end grocery run. And the man made quite clear — in the state facts.

When we reached their hotel, I told him the fare, and he handed me some folded bills, saying gruffly, "That'll do for my fare."

## WHAT WAS OFF? WAS IT ME, OR BURLINGTON?

strident back and forth to town, since the advent of that godforsaken UVM tax faces have dropped 40 percent. Good thing, I'm not letting go.

We dropped the economy off at the Harris Mills Complex and continued to the hotel. In front of the Hampton, the man gave me a 20, and then should've added change for another so he could give me a tip. Slightly confused and only vaguely paying attention to what I was doing, I took the second 20 and — don't ask me why — passed him back the first one. I then counted out three fives and five ones, and he gave me a 10 tip. Only when he said his dog had died, entered the hotel did I realize I would be writing only the tip.

I stepped out and counted until the lobby butty customers were nowhere to be seen,

As they exited and walked toward the door, it looked down to coast fat, which worked out to \$919 if it was bus.

When I'm certain that a customer has given me too much money, I return it as a matter of course. On the other hand, every once in a while someone will give me an outrageously big tip. I figure, the universe was presumably making up for the 20 I had just lost at the Hampton. (The next time you see me that may, especially when I'm grasping at straws to extricate my own skeeviness.)

So I decided the crap-long tip was to be mine, and drove off. I had conveniently bypassed the food-court solution to this fiscal dilemma. I could have simply passed out, stopped the guy and asked him, "Big tip you mean us to open up \$40?"

My behavior had had karma written all over it, and — this is key — I lost it. When you know it and don't stop yourself — in other words, when you're not an innocent self — the consequences seem to come fast and furious. Sure enough, the rest of the night was one long progression of vexed and ugly interactions. I felt like one of the "Red Houses" of New Jersey.

The crap-drinker came from the four franchises of La Quinta, a quartet of gentlemen with some connection, I was certain, to the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. They were out Quebecois, but less Puritan living and working in Montreal. And they were in town for the same fest, the money-benders.

Please, I know the Wine & Food Festival, and I love French people from France, but the conundrum of the two was more than I could bear on that friggin' night. When we pulled up to La Quinta Inn, I asked for \$12, and the guy taking heads off his blotted, in his totally brooding Puritan accent, "You are overcharging us! You are overcharging us!"

I said, "Yeah you. I am not overcharging, if you guys not gonna pay it, just get the fuck out."

With a vengeful snarl, he counted out \$12 and bundled off over his head leaving in a huff. There was no ap, no smile. It was the perfect cap to a perfectly reviling evening of cabdriving.

And to revisit my original question — Was it me, or Burlington? — I'm thinking it was me. ☺

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## NOT-SO-FREE PRESS

On orders from Gannett, Vermont's largest daily undergoes a risky media makeover



PAUL HERTZ

Staff photo

For the first time this spring, the biggest story in the *Burlington Free Press* appeared to be... itself.

Over the course of three months, Vermont's largest daily newspaper ran

more than two dozen stories and editorials about a host of changes coming to BPI College Station, a 224-page monthly printings press subsidiary, a radical redesign from broadsheet to tabloid and a new subscription model changing fee for online content.

"It's my 25 years in the media industry. I can't think of a time when I've been

this excited and fired up about what we're doing and how we're doing it," publisher Jim Fugler wrote in a characteristically ebullient February column announcing the changes.

Indeed, the news behind the newspaper was big — but it wasn't of substance and cause.

CONTINUED BELOW

## EXCLUSIVE!

BABYSITTING SUCCESS IN BURLINGTON HOMETOWN + SA

MILTON STUDENT DOODLES HER WAY TO A WIN HOMETOWN + SA



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Rising precipitous declines in print advertising, Gannett — the nation's largest newspaper chain and owner of the *Free Press*, USA Today and 100 other papers — announced a new strategy in February. It planned to play "offense" by picking up the price of home delivery and limiting free access to its newspapers' website. Gannett promised that, together, the move would bolster operating profits by \$500 million in 2013, helping to generate \$1.3 billion for shareholders by 2015.

"They're gambling that they can get all these people to pay significantly more without too many of them quitting altogether," says Jim Hopkins, a

former USA Today editor who writes Gannett Blog, an independent watchdog site. "The problem is, for many years they were really underwriting the news papers. They wanted us to weaken them as much as they could until they were to readers and said, 'We want you to pay more for it.'

At the *Free Press*, Gannett's new strategy manifested itself in a \$63-a-year — or 31 percent — hike in the price of home delivery and a limit of 10 free articles per month on its website to nonsubscribers. Making lessons from教训, Fugler packaged the price increase with an ongoing refurbishing of its spring green and a long-planned redesign of its

newspaper, calling the trio of changes his "triple-column strategy." Last month, those changes went into effect.

What's in it for the reader? Aside from a smart new look and color on every page, Fugler promised that the *Free Press* would be "growing and expanding our content." In a frontpage column on May 15, he wrote, "As we evolve, we will be making improvements to our content, technologies and digital development efforts."

But that memo evidently didn't make it to the newsroom, where executive editor Mike Townsend practiced more of the same.

"The changes are occurring chiefly with format as opposed to content because key content changes have largely already been made in anticipation of the retooling of the press," Townsend wrote in the same page in which Fugler's column appeared. "What you read in the final broadsheet edition of the *Free Press* will be the same content you will find, generally speaking, in the compact edition."

Rick Edwards, a media business analyst at the Pewter Institute, a journalism school and news website, says the question is whether papers that have "let back the reporting staff and news hole and raised the press [and] still going to look like a good deal to people."

"They're certainly putting that to the test," Edwards says.

It's a consequential question for a paper that, despite years of bleeding – its weekday circulation has plummeted from 54,636 in 2010 to 28,376 this March – remains what St. Michael's College journalism department chairman David Mindich calls "the most important daily in Vermont." It has a stable of accomplished reporters, like environmental writer Candy Page, open-government watchdog Mike Dougherty and Jack-of-all-trades Sam Heslingway. Its crusade for government transparency has drawn the attention of Vermont lawmakers and made the paper a Pulitzer Prize finalist this year.

At the clearest thing to the paper of record in Vermont, the *Free Press* is unquestionably critical to Vermont's journalism landscape.

"The *Free Press'* success is good for everybody," Mindich says. "I think that we should all be rooting for this to work and helping them along as they find the most effective way to deliver the news."

## Fab Tab

A week after the *Free Press* June 7 mistake, the paper posted a link on its Facebook page to a column Fogel had written about the redesign and asked readers for feedback.

The reaction was swift and fierce. Within three hours, more than 75 readers had weighed in, and these responses were overwhelmingly negative.

"I own a small breakfast restaurant," wrote Marc Birney of 8 Square Cafe in Burlington. "Every customer I have who is a subscriber hates it. Also, only allowing subscribers to access your online edition for a fee is aggravating others. You are doing a wonderful job at pushing away readers of every generation. What a bummer that it's all passed. Congratulations."

More recently, Heslingway resident Roger Kole has attempted to galvanize his neighbors to oppose the *Free Press* changes with an old-fashioned petition drive organized on the online Petition Forest. In a letter to the editor, Kole wrote, "It appears that the *Free Press* is so worried about being attacked by the masses, that it has decided to censor outside."

The grumbling from the masses may stem from the fact that, as *Justin Herald* and *Barn-Matador Times* reporter John Mitchell puts it, "Readers do like change. I've learned that the hard way over the past 40 years."

"From my perspective, it seemed like it might be too much, too fast," says Maria Archangelo, president

of the Vermont Press Association and publisher of the weekly *Stowe Reporter* and *Waterbury Record*. "On the other hand, I do understand the whole brave new world idea, ridding the broadsheet off, generating some excitement and buzz."

At the heart of the *Free Press'* redesign was a shift from a folded broadsheet paper similar in size to the *New York Times* to a stapled, 33.25-by-45-centimetre — or as Fugler calls it, "a compact, snazzy edition." Known in Europe as the "butorf" and common throughout the continent, the tall tab has only recently made waves in the U.S. Just down the other Greenbelt paper feature the

by three-weekly editorials featuring editorial-page editor Ali Segal's photo and byline.

Cheeky, who guarantees the use of reporters' photos, says, "I think it confuses readers because they've been educated to think when there's a mug shot of a writer, it's an opinion piece, not a reported piece."

"I think that they do that because they think newspapers aren't as pernicious as much to TV," he adds.

Building on the *Gannett* model of creating weekly "panorama tabs" sections such as the environment-focused "Green Mountain" and food-focused "BistroFest," the *Free press* added a new Saturday section called "Round Home," which due to its focus on family first-person stories — last Sunday was phoning Brian Meier's mom — pricing Vermont life. Writer and freelance journalist David Goodman of Waterbury will also offer a regular "Vermont Lives" column.

"I've had to kind of rework my process a little bit, but now I've settled to it and I actually like the format," says Linda Kelleher, chief creative officer at the Burlington Kellogg Somers Volk ad agency. "I think it's a pretty daring thing to change the layout of something like that — pretty gutsy and maybe risky."

But at least one reader argues the writer the paper would put out more money into better copyediting, instead of a redesigned paper printed on a raw-hewed grain. For the past month, Nate Orlan, a Burlington web analyst, has taken to Twitter to post photos of typewritten corrections and offer profs in the *Free press*, tagging them with #WhyEditorsMatter and capping thousands.

"I'm hoping that I can help shame the Burlington *Free Press* into allocating more into human resources as opposed to physical infrastructure," Orlan says in an interview. "For them to make such a big deal out of this has spurred me to try to point out that money could be spent on people improving what they've got. It did nothing more than put good ink whipping on a patient that was pretty steady to begin with."

## Under Pressure

It's not exactly breaking news that duly metropolitan newspapers are in trouble. Bowing to the pressures of a combined economy, declining print advertising revenue and increases in the cost of printing, the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* in May jolted the *American Arthur News* in trimming its production schedule. The *Greater-owned Detroit Free Press* in 2009 cut back home delivery to four days a week, while papers such as the *Rocky Mountain News* and the *Albuquerque Tribune* have gone out of business altogether.

"The economics of the old business of chopping down trees, turning dirt into newspaper, putting gas in trucks, paying cartoonists — the economics don't work anymore," says industry analyst Ron Doctor.

Across the country says Doctor, mostly newspapers that operate their own presses "are trying to cut costs on the printing side as much as they can, go digital and get paid by readers for going digital as quickly as they can."

# I THINK THAT WE SHOULD ALL BE ROOTING FOR THIS TO WORK AND HELPING THEM ALONG AS THEY FIND THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO DELIVER THE NEWS.

DAVID MINDICH, ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE

Forest; the *Central City Daily Enterprise*, the *Brevard Times* and the *Journal and Courier* in Lafayette, Ind.

In virtual Newsprint savings, a lighter design and a bolder, fed-on slow advertising days early in the workweek. Last week's Monday and Tuesday editions were 24 pages, compared to Friday's 72.

The new *Free Press* replaces the front-page smorgasbord of local and national copy with a more magazine-style focus on a solitary story, typically featuring one large photo, a reporter's snapshot and a few columns inches of text.

"They're prioritizing now and putting their most-pressing story on the cover," says Doug Clinton, a retired top editor of the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* and *Miami Herald* who lives in Middlebury. "It's not the story of the day done well. It's the story that didn't continue for their scrutiny or their decision to cover it."

In the aftermath of the redesign, the *Free Press* largely devoted its cover to regional quality-of-life stories, on transportation and pin prices, four on cops and crime, and a handful each on local government and schools.

To Mindich, who generally approves the redesign, devoting the entire front page to just one story leaves the reader without a sense of which issues are most important — or what he calls the news "hierarchy" but Brad Robertson, a former *Free Press* publisher who now heads up a company division called Generation1 in Phoenix, argues just the opposite:

"I like the format because it allows you every day to say, 'Here's a story you should listen to,'" says Robertson, who had a hand in the early stages of the *Free Press* redesign. "It provides an emphasis on a story a day."

The new *Free Press* runs on every page — including daily comics and TV listings. And it adds what Townsend called "more personality" by featuring reporter photos next to every byline. Gone are the anonymous "Voice of the *Free Press*" editorials — replaced

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## Not-So-Free Press

For many papers that means shutting old printing presses or joining forces with former foes to consolidate operations. Seeking a lighter footprint, Gemini itself has put \$100 million worth of real estate on the market — making the company's investment in the *Free Press'* downtown Burlington printing plant all the more remarkable.

"They've invested money in that press, which Gemini is not doing in many other markets, so that's good news," says Hopkins. Gemini's blog, *Melissa*, blogger Jan Borsenowski quotes that assessment.

"I see in 10 years great product being so specialized that the model will be mostly sold off," he says. "So I think it's pretty risky to invest in a printing press at this time, but unless they did the studies to back that up."

Indeed, a year after the 2010 spring floods destroyed the *Tiverton Argus* and *Meadow's* press in Tiverton, Michaud, the paper's publisher, opted against re-building and instead chose to outsource production to the New Hampshire-based Upper Valley Press. That outfit prints *Seven Days*, the *Brattleboro Reformer* and *The Winooski Record* and *View* of other Vermont websites.

"I don't particularly want to be a landlord or ever invest my money in this building," Michaud says of the 24,000-square-foot building he put up for sale in June with the intention of moving to a 5,000-square-foot space downstream. "It just makes sense to downsize the physical plant."

Fogler sold *Seven Days* in February that after rebuilding the 40-year-old Green Mountain press, he would agreeably seek out new print jobs — including newspapers like *Seven Days*.

Despite the sizable investment in the *Free Press'* printing facilities, though, Gossen continues to transfer jobs formerly located in Burlington — like customer service, graphics and design work — to regional hubs scattered across the country.

In general, Gossen's strategy for these years now is to consolidate as much as possible in a few places so they can achieve economies of scale," Hopkins says. "The thinking is that they can still design and lay out these newspapers but do it with fewer people and, in the case of smaller newspapers, to show they'll get better design."

That's the case at the *Freeeps*, which in June outsourced its layout and design department to Gemini's Albany Press, N.Y. Design Studio, according to industry blogger Charles Apple. Nationwide, Gemini has shed more than 10,000 jobs — or 25 percent of its workforce — since 2008. In February it offered buyouts to 800 longtime employees.

The picture is less clear at the local level, though. Seven Days reported in January 2009 that the *Freeeps* had laid off at least 15 people and eliminated seven other jobs in the previous year. As of the first quarter of 2010, the *Free Press* was still managing an employee, including reporters, to working, unpaid furloughs, during which they are eligible to collect unemployment.

But the future of daily newspapers depends to a large degree on whether they can get digital readers to pay for the pleasure of consuming their content online, as print-edition subscribers have done for years. Advertising alone — which is the sole revenue source for many weekly papers, including *Seven Days* — has yet to cover the entire cost of news gathering at legacy daily newspapers.

Twenty-twenty hindsight suggests that giving very free online content may have been "the dumbest thing newspapers ever did," as Clinton suggests. But ad sales experts at the same troupes if you're not searchable, you don't exist. Daily newspapers, which had already won their classified sections entrenched by Craigslist, were terrified into going along with the new free online model.

The *New York Times* and others have since changed course, but Gossen's decision in February is a watershed event. Changing the online content charges from \$1.00 million of its now-\$350,000 Friday readers across the nation.

"I think this is arguably one of the biggest [paywall] rollouts in the country," says Jason Ellis, assistant editor at *Hearst's* *Nashua Journal*. "The interesting thing is that are going to be a lot of medium and small newspapers, and there's a real question as to whether that can work on a smaller, more local level."

In fact, the *Free Press* is one of the last dailies in Vermont to start charging for online content. The Valley News has never posted more than a handful of its stories on its website; rarely every other daily newspaper in the state has either started charging for or letting access to its online offerings.

Rather than simply banking nosebleeds from accessing any content, Gossen is adapting what's known as a "tiered paywall." Made famous by the *Times* and used broadly by the MediaNews Group-owned *Advertiser* and *Advertiser-Bulletin*, the tiered model allows readers to access a set number of free articles a month — as in the *Freeeps'* case — but forces heavy users to pay. Those with print subscriptions receive free access to the website, as well as mobile and tablet apps.

According to Edmonds, the Paywall analysis, "the so-called paywall-paywall or metered model solves a couple of problems. Most obviously it means that you can still keep the traffic that comes

## EVERY CUSTOMER I HAVE WHO IS A SUBSCRIBER HATES IT. IPADS TO BIFOCALS, THEY'RE ALL PISSED.

MATT BIRNBAUM, 3 SQUARES CAFE

Despite the *Free Press'* crusade for transparency, Fogler said Townsend declined repeated requests for comment over the course of two and a half weeks. Fogler first said he was too busy to talk, then said his decision not to talk was firm. Reached by phone, Townsend too said he did not have time to be interviewed by a reporter. Asked whether anybody else at the paper was available, he said, "I think you already used" and hung up the phone. A Gemini corporate spokesperson also declined to answer questions.

The upside to investment in the *Free Press'* printing facilities, though, Gossen continues to transfer jobs formerly located in Burlington — like customer service, graphics and design work — to regional hubs scattered across the country.

In general, Gossen's strategy for these years now is to consolidate as much as possible in a few places so they can achieve economies of scale," Hopkins says. "The thinking is that they can still design and lay out these newspapers but do it with fewer people and, in the case of smaller newspapers, to show they'll get better design."

from Google searches and social-media referrals and links and all those things that typically account for a lot of traffic — but it also allows you to talk your regular readers to pay for it."

While you might lose a few eyeballs in the beginning, Doctor says, papers that manage the transition well can preserve unique visitors and digital advertising. The *Free Press*' website drew 266,000 unique visitors in January, generating 65 million page views, Roger said at the time.

More importantly, as Michael argues, it can shore up declining print-circulation numbers.

"It was always troublesome to me to have my friends come up to me — people who could well afford the subscription — and say, 'Why the hell should I pay for it if you're giving it away?'" the Times Argus and Herald publisher says. "Since we started charging subscriptions online, our drop in circulation has stopped, and we have a nice chunk of money which is helping us in our news coverage."

Of course, while news city-savers have thrown a welcome nettoony up for specialized content found only in niche trade publications or high-quality coverage unique to the New York Times and other top papers, the jury's still out about whether they'll pay for state and local news they could get elsewhere for free.

"I think it becomes contentious when a newspaper to really, really produce content of value if they're going to charge for it. They can't be the folks of all the free publications," says Clinton.

Although he's a paying believer, Clinton serves on the board of the non-profit Vermont Journalism Trust, which operates VTJmag.com, an affordable-free daily news source that increasingly competes with traditional outlets such as the *Burlington Free Press*. Vermont Anne Galloisky left her job at the Times-Messenger/Times Argus in one of several rounds of layoffs there.

VtMag.org is among the likely beneficiaries of the *Free Press'* paywall, as more subscribers migrate to its news services. Others include broadcast outlets like Vermont Public Radio and the state's three television stations — all of which now have robust, free websites — as well as free weeklies such as Seven Days.

"If people want to find local news, statewide news, regional news, scores, weather — they can get it all from us free and that's not going to change," says



WCAV news director Austin Tibbets. "If people decide they don't want to pay for content and they come to us, we welcome them."

Given the days when news outlets competed only within their medium, notes Tibbets, whose station partners withdrew funds.

"It's not like TV versus TV or radio versus radio. In Vermont, we're all vying to find viewers, readers, people to see our content," he says.

Vermont-based media consultant Martin Langlois, a former publisher of the *Burlington Free Press*, believes that charging for online content is a short-sighted move as the price/quality media companies that simply haven't figured out how to do it right.

"You're looking to get more people involved and engaged, & some to me, if you're not on the way to go," he says. "The internet has produced lots of major news businesses making tons of money — including content websites that don't charge for access."

POLITICO, the *Burlington Free* and *Gazette* come to mind.

But Anchorage, the Vermont Press Association president, sees it differently. Though she says her Stowe and Waitsbury papers are bringing in enough online advertising revenue to offset paywalls for now, she says the "blowback" from *Free Press* customers who don't want to pay concerns her.

"The idea that you're entitled to free news that's provided by professionals who have to be paid is distressing to me as a journalist," she says. "The *Free Press* is a tremendous news operation, and if you were to have that kind of operation, you're probably going to have to pay for it."

## Will It Work?

"For the *Burlington Free Press* and all the other *Gannett* newspapers, 2012 is it really, really, really, really critical year, because it's the year they decided to finally start charging people for online access," says Hopkins of Gannett Ring. "The question is going to be: Will it work? Because there are no other big

potential sources [of revenue] out there. Print advertising is falling and is going to continue to fall."

Hopkins notes that even Gannett's most optimistic estimates project revenue declines in 2012 and 2014. Adding to the problem, as *New York Times* media critic David Carr reported earlier this week, Gannett's pension plan is underfunded by \$942 million.

For the company to turn the ship around by 2016, it'll have to succeed at changing more for the same in print and charging for what was once free online — all without scaring off too many of its readers.

It's a huge gamble — potentially irritating older print customers who don't want to pay for digital access and younger readers who won't pay at all.

But at an industry conference last month, Gannett president Bob Beckley sounded an optimistic note, announcing that the nation's prior slide had resulted in a lesser-than-expected 3 percent drop in weekly circulation. Beckley and the company was on track to realize the \$400 million, 25 percent print-revenue growth — and its shareholders — is banking on.

To Langlois, Gannett's fundamental problem is just that: "Gannett is very much a stockholder-focused company. They're not trying to provide better community information in Vermont. They're trying to solve the problem of upping their stock price and dividend."

"It's a bottom-line-oriented strategy as opposed to a market-growth strategy," he adds.

But Anchorage believes the new management at Gannett will be thinking longer term. "I don't think they're doing it to shoot the stock price," he says. "I think they really know that they have to make big, important decisions that are gonna fix what [Gannett] is going to be in five, 10, 15 years. I think they are looking way ahead, as opposed to what we're going to do for next quarter's earnings."

Now the media landscape will ever on that true horizon — in Vermont and throughout the country — is impossible to predict. But like the rest of the Gannett empire, the *Burlington Free Press* is betting that readers will find enough news in the new smaller pages to overcome flagging old, hard cash for it. □

# Eyes in the Sky

Winooski fights crime with video surveillance — and it's not the only Vermont burg doing so

BY KEN PICARD

**W**alk through the Winooski Commons, as the small park in the center of the traffic roundabout is called, and you may be struck by what isn't there. The numerous trees, tables, ledges, benches and umbrellas on Abenaki River park, yet the remarkable absence of statuary symbols and road signs suggests that the "No Skateboarding" signs are well loved.

Down the hill by the Winooski River, couples push strollers along the litter-free RiverWalk and post graffiti-less walls. Those who park across the street in Winooski's smallest garage will most likely find a clean, safe and free of smokers and spray paint lot, according to the Winooski Police Department. Businesses and residents in the park are down "dramatically" from four years ago.

What's behind Winooski's recent trend of Mystery? Is it discern? A peek at the new bus shelter outside the Champion Mill offers a big hint. Etched into its transparent Plexiglas is this warning: "Video Surveillance on Property."

Nearly all of Winooski's downtown crime rate falls under the watchful, unblinking eye of the Winooski PD — two dozen eyes, to be precise. Several years ago, the city installed 10 surveillance cameras downtown, and has added another six in the last year.

On the first floor of the Winooski police station, Chief Steve McQuarrie stands behind his dispatcher's desk facing three 44-inch, high-def definition TV screens. Each screen is a checkered pattern of various downtown locations, captured from multiple angles.

At \$20,000 apiece, the cameras produce color, high-def images with night-vision capability. Some concern, such as those in the parking garage, are activated by motion sensors. Others are always on, recording virtually every movement downtown at all hours of the day and night. With a single click, the dispatcher can pan and zoom in to view license plates on passing vehicles.

All those images are stored digitally on a server for about 30 days, after which they're overwritten by new ones, McQuarrie explains, unless they're needed for an investigation. In those cases, the video can be downloaded and burned to a DVD.

"It has really reduced complaints," McQuarrie says. "The first couple of times we grabbed some kids for breaking streetlights down there and spray painting, the

word got out that, 'Hey! They can see us or videotape!'

Winooski is one of several Vermont municipalities, including Brattleboro and Bellows Falls, that have invested in video-surveillance equipment to combat graffiti. And like those other cities and towns, Winooski is seeing its investment pay off big time. Even as civil libertarians warn that closing more public spaces to be monitored 24/7 by police creates a slippery slope, communities that court afford to put more — or any — eyes on the streets have

found and immediately crushed new light fixtures, which cost the city around \$10,000 dollars each to replace.

"Multiply that by 50-80 lights a year and you see, 'Gee, that's a big expense every year,'" Palmer says.

Another expense came from skinheads who were "graffiting," or slaking, along the newly painted railings and benches — all of which had to be scrubbed and repainted.

"It was costing us hundreds and hundreds of man-hours just to maintain this

Although the Winooski City Council had to approve the purchase of the surveillance system, McQuarrie says the plan faced virtually no push back from local citizens. Despite Vermont's strong libertarian streak, McQuarrie is unsurprised by the lack of controversy the cameras generated. "People see it for what it is: looking for people committing crimes and keeping people safe."

In fact, Winooski cameras have been useful for more than just nabbing petty offenders. In 2005, McQuarrie recalls, they



Winooski Police Officer Steve McQuarrie

found surveillance in commercial real estate deterrent to unwanted activities.

"From my perspective on the maintenance side of things, it's been fantastic," says Steve Polson, Winooski's city engineer and public works supervisor. According to Polson, in 2006, shortly after the city completed its downtown redesign, his department experienced a rash of destructive behavior: people destroying benches, smearing railings, ripping up portions of the RiverWalk and spray painting walls.

Not all the damage was deliberate, Polson stresses. Occasionally, short-haired clowns dashed the wall beside the new

stair." Polson adds. Since the surveillance cameras were installed, however, "I would say 30 percent of that has gone away."

Winooski police don't watch the cameras 24 hours a day. When an incident occurs — say someone reports a break-in in the parking garage — an officer will go back and review the footage in an effort to identify the perpetrator.

Oe, say a cell phones on a weekend night that a fight is under way outside a bar. In that case, McQuarrie says, the dispatcher can pan and zoom the camera to document the scene, then report whatever is happening to officers not yet on the scene.

were used to help connect a Swanton man accused of trying to abduct a 19-year-old woman who was walking along Colchester Avenue. The video from use of Winooski's cameras captured images of the man's truck driving through the roundabout, which corroborated his statement about being elsewhere at the time of the attempted abduction.

To another incident about a month ago, McQuarrie recalls, the mother of a Winooski woman who was involved in a car accident contacted the police, insisting that her daughter had been "killed maimed" by someone who had been shooting with online. Given the daughter's history

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of emotional difficulties," McQueen says, police considered it a possibility — that is, until they reviewed the video from the time of her disappearance.

"We had her on video down at the bus station," McQueen reports. "She was waiting for someone and leaving early. We saw the vehicle pull up, a guy get out, they give each other a greeting hug, get into the car together and drive away."

Had police not had this video to show the mother, McQueen adds, "I'd be over there today hunting a kidnapper."

Other small municipalities have been getting into the surveillance-camera game, and the surveillance cameras in Irondale (population 2500), Police Chief Gene Wilcox says, may become more common in the downtown and industrial transportation center. As Wilcox recalls, the cameras found initial resistance from residents who were concerned about how police might use the footage.

"We just had to convince people that was not big brother watching you," he says. Since then, the option has proved "extremely useful" in solving crimes, including a stabbing in the parking garage several years ago.

For citizens who cash-strapped communities, surveillance equipment is a cheaper alternative to 16-hour police coverage. For years, the tiny border town of Rutherford (population 2800) had a problem on weekend nights, especially in the summer, when dozens of youths gathered on one particular corner along Main Street.

"It's not that big a town population-wise, but there's a lot of noise," explains Rutherford volunteer chief Linda Collins. For years, the local received complaints about the teenagers "stopping traffic here, honking and hollering, playing loud music, and all that stuff."

Because of this, Rutherford came up with its own police force, so it routes its one sheriff per day through the Franklin County Sheriff's Department. On weekends, sheriff's deputies were routinely called to the problem corner, Collins says. They dispersed the crowd — which retained once the police left the scene.

Frustrated, the Rutherford administration finally voted last year to install a \$7000 web-based surveillance system that can be operated and viewed remotely. Collins says Rutherford's deputies and state troopers can now log on to the town's surveillance system and view the images using laptops in their vehicles. Since the cameras are wired, problems in the downtown area have disappeared.

Collins notes that the selected fielded no complaints from local citizens about the cameras.

"I suppose the drug dealers don't think it's great, but there's been lots of that on that corner," she says. "The only comment we ever heard was 'Good it's about time!'

**S**uch law-enforcement success stories raise as inevitable question: Have Vermonters grown so accustomed to being on camera whenever they go in public — at airports, public schools, shopping malls and ATMs — that the idea of an anonymous police surveillance no longer nags them at all?

Dan Barrett doesn't think so. The staff attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union of Vermont says radio surveillance in the Green Mountain State is still less pervasive than in most places — and that Vermonters want to keep it that way.

"We think that people should be able to go about their business, whether it's walking down the street or commuting to work or whatever, without the fear of permanent, unbroken, 24-hour surveillance," Barrett says.

The results of public mail-in petitions that have considered public video cameras appear to split. Several years ago, Bill Lewis fully endorsed the idea, only to see it falter. His huge community backhaul, Burlington, the state's largest municipal city, has never had city-owned video cameras installed on public roads, except those that monitor the interiors and immediate surroundings of essential buildings such as city hall, the high school and the public works department. One long-time officer at the Burlington PD couldn't say why, but speculated that the idea wouldn't fly politically.

For his part, Barrett thinks public outrage about police surveillance will be generated over a few mobile, 360-degree cameras the inevitable result of what the industry calls "surveillance matrix websites," she draws. As part of the "increasing militarization" of domestic police forces, Barrett says, several police departments around the country have already begun using small, domestic drones to surveil U.S. citizens.

In June 2011, according to U.S. News & World Report, a Lakota, W.D. man was arrested after police tracked his location using an unannounced drone. And just last week, the Atlantic reported that the U.S. Air Force was using military drones to test civilian automobiles on New Mexico highways.

Jernett predicts that Vermonters' first exposure to drones will come via U.S. Border Patrol, which already uses them in other areas of the country for border enforcement. It's worth noting that, in some northern Vermont communities, Border Patrol already provides emergency backup law enforcement when state police or other agencies aren't readily available.

"I think people will become much more attuned to this issue," Jernett suggests. "It's like an issue of the camera at the ATM and mom's ATM, who's watching me now?"

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## GRANADA

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# Seven Lengths of Vermont

Bicycle touring: The other side of the range

BY LEATH TSINGH

I offered my name, but he did not appropriate it. I asked if this was private land or a nudist forest, extrapolated there must have been an padded Speedo-like shorts, cold and裸 and increasingly nervous, waiting for an answer. I asked again. He stated: It was a black store — not men or nudists, just black. The kind of store a cinder block would give you if a cinder block had eyes. And if a cinder block were drunk.

I didn't know that he was drunk. I'd come down one of the big mountain passes and landed at a pond, all silver and smooth and shadowed. It was only the first night of my trip, so I didn't need a bath, but I did need a place to set up my hammock. I unzipped a bundle on the side of the pond and rolled over to it. A little, yappy dog snarled my ankles. A stack of cargo pallets stood beside the track that was already forming. Rolling rock and tail boy. Cigarettes behind the ear. The man stared at the fire, or into it, and then at and into me.

After considerably longer than I felt comfortable with, my tour guide had (or "hadn't" had, seeing as I never did get his name) said that he owned this land and I could camp here if I liked. His voice had boozed wine in it. Cinder blocks, too. He was maybe 30 years old. Wore big boots. A pretty handsome guy, all things considered.

I knew that whatever I was getting myself into wouldn't be easy to get out of,

## OUTDOORS



—then engage him I would.

I thanked THE for the invitation — he said, "No doubt" — and parked my bike beside some trees. I set up my hammock and remained in the fire with a smashed-up dinner sandwich. The dog jumped up against my leg, pawing and yapping and barking. I didn't mind, but THE started yelling.

It wasn't so much that he yelled as how it was like a chant, like he was entrancing himself to the rhythm of his own anger. Bigger, bigger, bigger bad, bad, bad! It was like he'd fallen down

several deep black wells and was trying to climb out, was stuck in a cage bad, bad, had, dit, git, git. I asked some questions, something about the pallets, maybe, and he emerged from the depths of his racism only to fall back to the bottom.

I waddled the sandwiches as fast as I could, hoping to shut the dog up. But I couldn't eat fast enough, and Testosteron Head kept on bigger, bigger, bigger, barking. He circled. A finely blunted point, looking somewhat like a plane. It made one think how far away I was, out here in these mountains of a Vermont I'd hardly known.

The dog yapped louder. I had an overly tight grip on my sandwich. Bad, bad, bad.

Over the course of a week in early June, I rode approximately 500 miles on a bicycle. This was a new experience for me. Before this trip, I'd never pedaled more than 20 or so miles in a day. A handful of years had seen me on a bike a handful of times.

The route I traveled was designed en route, seat-of-the-spandex-pants style. I rode from Ferrisburgh all the way to the dirt roads of West Hilltop, Green

Rise and Gildford, then dragged the east-central side of the state through Woodstock and South Royalton and Hardwick, and quite spot I'd never heard of like Springfield and Dummerston (I bypassed a place called Goose Green and have not yet forgotten myself). Once my initial supply of sandwiches ran out, I subsisted on various combinations of casseroles, instant Jell-O, granola, powdered milk and hot water from pasture coffee machines. I bought one straight. I slept on a foot, in a shelter, on a patch and in the weeds. I hit Canada at Derby Line, crossed a gravel path along the edge of Lake Memphremagog and crisscrossed my way south, agains driving rain, all the way to my sister's in Richwood.

By the time I made it back to Vergennes on the seventh day, my body was beat up and broke down and other things, as well. My back and neck ached. My right knee was clicking with the regularity of a metronome. I had that deep horse-brass sensation in my hands and all through my "feel." And my legs felt weak and numb, like they might not want out from under me if I were to use them for anything but pedaling.

More impressive than the body, though, was the mind, the head, breasted sempitneb of a mind that I lived in and with for much of the trip. (I'm thinking here of phrases such as "time bonds," "sick and twisted," "let's throw some more trout on that snap-hap.") A friend who has done considerable bike touring informed me ahead of time that I'd probably write something called *Chances Aren't for Chasing* and a set of Ultra Venetian for two-ags, and that I could expect all different kinds of pain and small problems. He even left me the pamphlets (*read, milestones*) that his mother used on a tour of Europe in the 70s. It was only my head — what would happen to it after consecutive 80-mile days on the road — that he neglected to mention.

**T**he first lesson that I learned home late a pound of lesson and tried my运气 on a road map with a blue marker I looked over the map 63 village-clusters, 23 cross-roads, 26

lake-pond reservoirs, 10 counties. Had trouble keeping track of all the redshift, so instead I focused types woodchuck, chaperone, racoon, garter snake, blue-black butterflies every couple of miles. Estimating the number of moths, shrews, pot-bellied mice, roosting hawks also proved challenging. I tried breaking it up into \$5 PER MILE per day, but certain difficulties persisted: weed whacking included? What about real, pot-bellied worms? Is a farmer mowing a hayfield a totally different category?

I traced the map to the wall beside my desk and wrote my stats in the corner in water enough. I scribbled little notes all along the route with arrows pointing to precise spots: fish-delivery truck, dairy creamer stand, hardware store, Bunker overdrive switch, bell on north! It still wasn't enough, so I added more wet egg water, SIS amazons, snapping turtle, Lower Prokofie food, goat and unchristened. I could see that I'd covered some ground, made my way through rich towns and poor, visited in gleaming streets, befriended a wonderful, approachable woman who offered me a cabin to live in for the summer. I could check Vermont's "mysteriousness and larcenyability" but I couldn't *feel* it. Not like I could when I was out there. Not so a scrap shop in my mind. Vermont the Particular was already riding back into Vermont the Bundle, that embarking, my myth.

**A**bicycle covers massive distances quickly — much as a car does — but on a bicycle you are out in the open, always grateful to everything. This is perhaps obvious. It's the implementation of the observation that I find fascinating, and that my friend neglected to mention:

One cyclist I met up near Lake George, an endurance freak who has traversed the entire country and often puts down 175-mile days, referred to car travel as "being in the cage." When biking, you are decidedly *out* of the cage. Everything from the sun on the highway shoulder to the thunderheads breaking in the distance, from the smell

ON A BICYCLE YOU  
ARE OUT IN THE OPEN,  
SENSES PRICKED  
TO EVERYTHING.



Laurin Toma photo by Sam Mazzas

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## Seven Lengths of Vermont BY JESSICA

of hope to the smell of exhaust, from Brattleboro to Berlin — it all comes in.

The result: Stasis. Scrap heap. A kind of tragic overhauling, kaleidoscopic experience. Bookend, zweckmässig-addict as the public library steps! Gentle-old handshakes and arm-wrapping golden groceries in little match nests! Child in a red T-shirt swinging on a tire swing with a masterpiece as hand! Shopping cart! Hand-me-downs! Are these folks really all neighbors? Are they our neighbors? Or are I just a tourist, just some fool who should get a real job, settle down in one town, stop rambling and observing and forcing myself to "make it all lie," whatever the hell that means?

Ride touring is not a means to answering these questions. Bike touring is disturbing. And it's awesome because it is disturbing. Bike touring is like Mach Two: many beautiful images and too many and integers and too many miles standing toward too many unexpected revelations.

**W**hen I finished my sandwich, the dog quieted down and jumped up onto Toddish's Honda CRF. He was still drunk, at a cinder block, but now, evidently, he was tender, petting the dog with the hand not holding the Rolling Stock. We began to talk, and though the conversation veered into incoherence and repetition and long-silence pauses, it was indeed a conversation. And not just any conversation, but a good one, a conversation with a man from "the far side of the range," from one of 4 million Vermonts I've hardly known.

We talked about many things: how long it takes to burn 20 pellets, how you can heat your house through the winter on lumber millings, how nice the pond and mountains looked, how his 46-year-old dad and 80-year-old mom still live in an old house back near the pass road; how it wasn't all that challenging to set up "parameters" in Grandad's dugout "that would."

"You know, I was in the service five years," he said, "and there was only one guy I stayed in contact with afterwards, a good friendman, a real good friendman, my one real friend from all that time. And you know what? He blew his brains out."

I had nothing, then something grousing and from the heart, but completely true. The stars were out, both in the sky and reflected on the surface of the pond.

"It reinvented me," Tim went on. "No, not reinvented, but made me sad. Yeah, it made me sad. And it still does. It makes me sad to talk about it."

The dog in his lap snuggled down a little deeper. The night was cold enough to see your breath. There was no beer left. The bar pilot's umbrellas were glowing their way home. "It makes me sad to talk about it. Even right now."

**O**n about year's climbing a hill, the heat and fatigue and meteorologic leave joint conspiring to take you out, frost you for good. The next you're munging down the miles of smooth new blacktop, your body dissolved in cool shade and shade varies, it's a billy state, and on a bicycle you can't help but go up and down, up and down. The transitions between the two — between the up and the down — are often imperceptible. They happen in a flash. That might be the metaphor I'm searching for.

Or maybe this: One minute you're tired of a man, lop-sided of your differences, your robbery and his deep black well, your flip-up teeth and his gaps and spaces. The next you want to put your arm around him, tell him something heartfelt that isn't true, or just let him know that you appreciate the invite to camp on his land, and that you'll be sure to stop in and say hello the next time you're passing by. He says that'd be fine, and shambles on home, leaving you alone with the full bags and pingers. The moon is rising, the hammock swaying. The tenth leghopping together Vermont the bundle are hoisting. The feathers sweat planes, they're shooting stars. ☺

1. "Dynamite" by the Burlington-based band Local 67. 2. "Seven Lengths of Vermont" refers to a different outdoor adventure in which the author explores the state's ridgelines, valleys, forests, seasons and people over the course of a year in his beloved state. His first essay published in Seven Days appeared on Oct. 22, 2010, with the title "Hiking the Length of the Green Mountains." In January 2012, his last column, "Hiking the Length of the Green Mountains," was published in Seven Days.

# Law and Disorder

Theater review: *Unnecessary Farce* at Saint Michael's Playhouse

BY ERIK ESKELSEN

**O**f all the theater pieces being produced today, perhaps none sets clearer audience expectations than farce. To buy a ticket to a farce is to accept an invitation to be amused — simply because — by a comic situation that escalates easily toward a mordant resolution, propelled partly by folly. If you need a farce, expecting, say, deep character development or evocation of important themes, then the joke's on you.

The show now running at Saint Michael's Playhouse broadens its intentions even more clearly by putting the word "farce" in the title. The word used in the title of "unnecessary," making *Unnecessary Farce* a venerated promise of something unashamedly, unashamedly light. Under the direction of University of Vermont theater professor Gregory A. Ramos, this production makes good on that promise — from its opening surge of police officer Eric Sherrard (*Turner Crumley*) in a pair of Superman underpants, to its clever line list, which punctuates the ride with a double-inducing exclamation point:

Part of what makes *Unnecessary Farce* so funny is its benevolent reverence for its essentially serious central scenario. Dramatic Paul Slade Sherrard could have been drawing on the backwash of his Chicago shooting grounds when he crafted the story in 2006. But its theme is one all too familiar in Vermont audiences, as well as the embodiment of neighborhood funds by an elected official.

As the play begins, we meet two cops, Sherrard and partner Billie Dwyer (*Amanda Ryan Pegez*), in a model room on the morning they plan to videotape, via hidden cameras, the mayor of their understated burg, Mayor Melvyn Gill Crumchard, confounding his financial difficulties to usurp a usurped usurper Karen Brown (*Molly Lee*) in the adjoining room. Brown is a plant working in cahoots with the cops.

This setup offers an inventive variation on the bedsheet farce formula — the



Left to right: Turner Crumley (Eric Sherrard), Amanda Ryan Pegez (Billie Dwyer), Christopher John (Agent Frank), Danielas Katinas (Karen Brown), Amanda Ryan Pegez (Celia) and Abby Lee (The Mayor)

EACH PLAYER EMBRACES THE ESSENTIAL ABSURDITY OF THE PLAY BY STEERING CLEAR OF SUBTLETY IN GESTURE, ACTION OR EXPRESSION.

beds being metal beds — that retains all the room-hopping, door-shrugging and hysterically energetic that defines the genre. Set designer John Desko's set may be the only touch of restraint in the production. The audience peers into two more or less identical metal rooms with metal double-issue beds and not much else. Each room contains four doors — opening to a hallway, closet, bathroom and an adjoining room. As Playhouse production design goes — and compared with recent Broadway-directed UVN shows — it's fairly sparse. But the stage brims with kinetic energy as the players are swept up in a whirlwind of comic misdeeds, mishaps and misunderstandings.

Addressing the prior inhibition — holding the mayor to account for a missing \$6 million — constitutes the plot of *Unnecessary Farce*. Melodramas and sexual misunderstandings complicate the case, such as when the mayor enters the model room multiple times over the course of the stag and thinks her discovering other characters and sexual romps — in varied configurations. One highlight

appears to involve the mayor's security chief, Agent Frank (Critic Welsh), and Officer Sheridan.

Forces involving Brown, the uninvited bed visitor, keep the headlines banner to the show. She and Sherrard's need moments to bring their role-in-to a romantic boil throughout the play, building dramatic and sexual tension. But when the sirk is back on, and she attempts to convey a message to the cops on the other side of the wall by referring to her own temperature, Agent Frank thinks she's getting hot for her.

Another funny subplot has a clunker note with the appearance of an answerless Todd (Christina Kohn), an operative of the obscure Scottish Mafia. He efforts to assist the police crackdown are confounded by his elaborate pressurized-radiant mask, which starts playing bagpipes. It doesn't help that Todd's bagpipe thunders to incomprehension when he's not. Kohn may have mastered that rare dialect, because it's a valiant effort. It's impossible to say for sure. Without question, though, Kohn's thundering

flag cuts through this froth like a shark in a lake.

While the plot descends deliberately into chaos from scene to scene, Ramos' cast turn in performances of laudable control. Each player acts an alignment with her or his particular comic spouse, and thus each succeeds in standing out.

Each also finds a signature way of earning laughs. Lee's screenname would like nothing more than to show the mayor the books and be done with it, but events conspire to make her clothes keep flying off. Pegez is another standout in the role of rooster cop Dwyer. Her hyper-aggressiveness to prove her mettle, despite deficiencies in basic police skills, translates into a funny frenetic turn. The balance of the cast bears this light load with aplomb; each player embodies the essential absurdity of the play by steering clear of subtlety in gesture, action or expression.

Such an unrefined play risks becoming ridiculous, and toward the middle of the second act, events grow comically entangled to a slightly tedious extreme. The stars never flag, though, and manage to pull the threads of this yarn together. What's more, going way soy over the top may have been Sherrard's authorial goal. *Unnecessary Farce* plays as an acidic riff on the conventions of both the bedroom farce and the police sitcom drama.

In its seeming irreverence, the work brings to mind last Playhouse season's impudent production of the much-maligned albeit a musical comedy, *The Mystery Chaperone*. In both plays, contradiction gears become their own primary subjects. They can play on display as curious-cultural artifacts, pulling no punches on their absurdly banal world of conflict, dialogue, slapstick comedy and cartoonish characterizations. If any deep question persists during the spectacle, it's probably about why we delight in such other others.

In any event, drinking is totally optional while enjoying *Unnecessary Farce*. Laughter, however, is likely to occur involuntarily. ☀

# Turkish Delight?

Taste Test: Istanbul Kebab House

BY ALICE LEVITT

**A** restaurant-goer could not wait for a more accommodating than Vink Oktay, who owns the Istanbul Kebab House with his wife, Jacqueline. He makes a point of holding doors for ladies. He's genuinely concerned about whether diners enjoyed their meals, and, most importantly, Oktay is an able leader on a culinary journey that most Vermonters are taking for the first time: His knowledge of the history of Turkish food is a treat in itself.

But Oktay, who opened Istanbul Kebab House in Essex Junction's 10 Kellogg Road apartment complex at the end of May, still has a few things to learn about the restaurant business.

Despite my fears to the contrary, the eatery's location is not among its problems. Though the building it previously held the Salpura Grill and the Hideaway is set off from the road, its location doesn't seem to be hurting business. On a Monday night, the newest restaurant was nearly full at 7 p.m. The next Thursday at dinnertime, attendance was again respectable.

Dishes are spread out at three seats a front room with an angled, ceiling-to-floor window; a cozy back dining room, and a bottom-floor sitting up flight of stairs. As in the days of the Eclipse, berets and ridings are painted aqua, and several walls are lavender, creating an ambience that one of my dining companions compared to Jack Pippin's favorite watering hole on "There's Company," the Biggie Smalls' cyrillic photo booth, rug and sofa set lead the quirky space an ethnic twist.

The menu is equally sprawling, with about 80 dishes, from appetizers to entrees to desserts. The ambition is enviable, but for a restaurant just months past, it seems like a lot to take on. Even more daunting are the prices. Entrees start in the \$12 range and go up to \$26.95. The mixed-grill kabob plate that I shared for an early, not-for-review meal was \$12.95



Istanbul Kebab House, 10 Kellogg Road, Essex Junction, 802/862-1000

and sufficed for sharing only with the addition of appetizers.

I found little rhyme or reason to the staggering price gaps. Labanous, or Tarhana pizza — consisting of seasoned ground lamb in hand-rolled dough with a side salad for a fresh, DIY topping — cost a reasonable \$5.99. Yet just below it on the menu was a Turkish flatbread called sevda pide for \$12.99 — an appetizer price for more sensational in terms of special-occasion, show-stopping establishments. Could it really be worth it?

We decided to find out. The rustic, homestyle flatbread was boat shaped, with soft dough rolled up at its corners around clumps of moist egg and mozzarella cheese. Those familiar with Italian food will recognize the tangy, peppery-like flavor of sevda sausage. The oily, fatty meat paired brilliantly with the egg and cheese for a delightful, breakfast-style treat.

It was good sized, too, with the ends hanging over a large plate. In fact, our waitress first ate one slice due to precocious positioning while bringing the dish up the stairs. She offered to have an extra moisture flatbread made for us to replace it, but that seemed excessive.

This incident typified the pappish egomaniacs that I observed in all four young people who served me in one way or another during two visits. Though wanting to please, they seemed insufficiently trained. There was not a spark of recognition when I ordered dishes by their proper Turkish names. The same server who claimed to have the main polo cooks told us that the beef kebab was smothering that night, yet couldn't specify just what beef kebab was. When he called a coworker to help her explain, he struggled with the difference between ground and braised beef. We elected not to venture \$12.99 for the mystery dish.

Instead, that night we tried the manta, a central Asian dumpling I was



# SIDE dishes

BY EDREN HIRSCH & ALICE LEVITT

## From Vine and Sea

BRANSON HIRSH OPENS RESTAURANT

It's a roadside curiosity for its enormous wine cask — Vermont's largest — that greets travelers no Route 7 in Branson. But **BOTTLED VINE**

is serious about wine — and new food.



Owners **EDREN** and **UMBRA** Zahn released Chenier Valley's first vintage in the spring of 2011. On July 6, they celebrated another first — the opening of an eatery on the winery grounds called the **WINERY HOUSE RESTAURANT**.

Steve Zahn says pairing wine with food has long captured his fancy. Operating a restaurant seemed like a natural use of his already bustling property, which includes lodgings in 20 cottages dating from the 1930s. Finally, Zahn says, it's a softoff day who has been disappointed by the lack of a dedicated fish restaurant nearby. So he decided to open a casual fish-and-fry-style, counter-service spot that specializes in fresh seafood, shipped from Boston and packed with the winery's fresh varieties.

Zahn menu items pairing his newest, white Bosian fish with oysters, clams and other shellfish. Other possible accompaniments include the restaurant's eponymous New England clam chowder, lobster rolls, whale-belly clams and Gulf shrimp. As for his newly baked white, Arctic Goose, Zahn says, "It's going to be quite a hit with fish."

halibut dinners or scallops. Fishermen can order hot dogs or hamburgers, while those craving a hopper-pain fix will find local beers.

For dessert, Zahn has cronuts and bread-new Chocolate Mousse, a red wine flavored with chocolate. Chenier Valley is also introducing a wine made from Vermont maple syrup, using a recipe Zahn learned from a vintner in Nova Scotia. "It's really a nice flavor — you can easily pick up the maple syrup on the taste," he says. "It's a smooth, higher-alcohol-content, dessert-style wine." An appropriate end to a winery dinner.

— A.L.

## Market Flair

LOGAN'S OF BURLINGTON TO OPEN JULY 12

A banner of yellow-green paper now hangs over Burlington's lower Main Street. Inside, the 30 Main Street space most recently home to Magpie's on Main is now painted and with yellow papers in each window announcing the permanent arrival of **LOGAN'S OF VERMONT**. Inside the store, the signs simply read, "steakhouse" and "chef-owned and operated."

That chef is kitchen veteran **MARK LOGAN**. He left **CARIBOU** earlier this year, and his previous employers include **BUDDAH'**s, the formal **ETIENNE ALLIEZ** and the down-the-line **CHAMPS STREET TAPAS**. Well, he says his own dining concept is unlike anything he's ever done.

Logan's Vermont will offer just steaks. "It's a take-away meal solution where the client can choose the level of effort they want to put in the meat — everything from raw to fully cooked," Logan explains.

Though the menu isn't set in stone yet, his confidence enough in his grilled Calvados sandwich to say it will make the cut. Logan expects to

offer six or six pizzas each day, including simple options such as local cheese on homemade sourdough.

The chef-owner hopes to open by September 1. If all goes well, he plans to make Logan's increasingly convenient by instituting first-order ordering, then delivery. Meanwhile, we'll have to count up those yellow signs for another month or two.

— A.L.

## Unsound Ground

LARGE GARDENERS PRODUCE NEWS OF PESTICIDES, GM-CROPS

Reports of ailing plants prompted **GREEN MOUNTAIN COMPOST** to send samples

offer-free soil tests each day, including simple options such as local cheese on homemade sourdough. The chef-owner hopes to open by September 1. If all goes well, he plans to make Logan's increasingly convenient by instituting first-order ordering, then delivery. Meanwhile, we'll have to count up those yellow signs for another month or two.

— A.L.

How these compounds ended up in the soil remains a mystery. "Based on our records, there's very little use of chlorpyrifos, and diazinon is restricted and not available to homeowners," says **CARY DUGLER**, section chief of the pesticide program at the state Department of Agriculture. "We're very confused as to why it's shown up in lawn clippings."

GMC sent news and samples after receiving reports of leaf curl and wilt in both staff and consumer

## By the Slice

TAKE OUT IN CHITINA TO OPEN IN BURLINGTON'S SOUTH END

Playing fast to a fussy crew: pizza, a new take-out joint will be a fitting place by the slice at the southwest corner of Main and St. Paul streets in Burlington.

Inside **PIZZA PIZZA**, scheduled to open later this summer, co-owner **CHRIS SLICE** plans to sell New York-style slices "with this crust and good cheese," as well as a selection of pasta brands stuffed with cheese and meat.

"Everywhere you go, pizza is expensive. I think pizza should cost 99 cents a slice," says Alice, who works as a contractor but counts **PIZZA PIZZA** on his rebound.

Alice, who is originally from Hawaii, says his wife will run the kitchen. Sofia will offer free local delivery and a few outside tables. "It'll be a place to grab a slice of pizza quick," Alice says.

— E.B.

of soil will out of state for testing, and now the culprit is clear. Last week, those test results used the presence of two persistent herbicides — chlorpyrifos and diazinon — which had been applied and bulk compost sold for past spring.

The two compounds were found at levels between .57 and 1.3 parts per billion. The Vermont Department of Health says it is safe to eat affected plants containing such trace amounts.

"The models we use to assess the risk are very

conservative," says **SARAH VISA**, a toxicologist with the VDH. The levels of herbicide likely would need to be increased a "thousand-fold" to justify a health warning, she adds.

How these compounds ended up in the soil remains a mystery. "Based on our records, there's very little use of chlorpyrifos, and diazinon is restricted and not available to homeowners," says **CARY DUGLER**, section chief of the pesticide program at the state Department of Agriculture. "We're very confused as to why it's shown up in lawn clippings."

GMC sent news and samples after receiving reports of leaf curl and wilt in both staff and consumer

gardeners. For some gardeners, such as **JESSICA WOLSTENHOLME** of Rutland, those symptoms were mystifying until the news of potential contamination came out.

"I was brushing my tomatoe carling. I only had a couple of blossoms, and everything else stayed dried out," he says, adding that his peas looked "terrible."

Wolstenholme says he purchased four yards of compost and topsoil from **GARDENERS & SURPLUS** in May,

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## Turkish Delight? BY MICHAEL STONE

Forbier with big, round Uyghur noses and pumpkin-filled Uzbek bread, but had never tried the Turkish version. At Istanbul's Rebek House, they resemble tiny crocheted pastries and taste like the restaurant — a level of workmanship that I think justifies at least the \$12.49 pricing tag.

Though the pita was adorable, each piece was so small that the ground-beef stuffing was practically microscopic. The meat said it was spiced, but I couldn't find enough to tell. What I do know is that the tomato sauce in which the meat was served was pleasantly acidic, though a layer of oil melted atop it. Yogurt added a tangy contrast, and a liberal shower of za'atar brought beautiful color and another layer of bright flavor.

We ordered the dash alongside the yogurt chicken, which was better. More experienced servers might have told us that the combination of saucy, crumbly and sweet flavor is the former.

sweetness. Another squeeze of lemon would also have helped the hummus. Turkish salt-crusted ewe was better balanced, with its fruity tomato and spicy citruses. The lamb gheezeh was best of all. Ultrafresh, it was slender and very fine. It also had an unexpected strong salty note, thanks to plenty of tabbouleh.

We ordered the sugar bough, described as cheese millet in phyllo, to celebrate my friend's own homemade phyllo triumph earlier that day. Unfortunately, there was no phyllo in sight. The dough appeared to be rolled-up eggroll wrappers. We couldn't discern any cheese inside the dry dough fingers, either.

We much preferred the falafel. The order of five stacked falafel croquettes was surprisingly aromatic, liberating with slices of tomato. The falafel was earthy, with cumin and chickpea flavor, and uncharacteristically airy. Thin slices of carrot and cilantro brought a pleasant crunch and sweet flavor to the former.

## THE FALAFEL WAS EARTHY, WITH CUMIN AND CHICKPEA FLAVOR, AND UNCHARACTERISTICALLY AIRY.

the two dishes was identical. The meat turned out to be a whole lot of tomato and yogurt. However, the flavorful ground-chicken kebab beneath distinguished itself. Blended with red bell pepper and parsley, a dose of paprika gave the meat a hint of pleasant heat. I liked the charred skin that was on the result of the low-and-glow grill; the kitchen uses for lemons.

On my other visit, the name with a local chef friend, we located more as appetizers. The \$17.99 meze platter was an obvious must. It made a great first impression with the arrival of a glass wooden bowl, hence named the warm, gassy bowl, hence named the warm, gassy bowl that we would be dipping in a range of purées. Filled with six, the bowl resembled an unfrosted Indian purée with black seeds seeds on top, but tasted more like ultrafresh beans. Dipping the bowls in yogurt-based hummus reminded me of long ago Indian meals (in New York) that I've missed terribly living in Vermont. The chill-and-warm-braised dip was made mostly with beans, but you get the idea.

Above the platter, fresh-stuffed grape leaves were a bit too sour for my taste, owing to a large helping of black currants. I would have liked more acid to offset the

we also tried a lamb shish, or givrig. Baked at a stone oven, it was served in a flat-shaped earthenware bowl, but there was definitely lamb inside. Less, indeed chunks of it. The thin broth in which it was cooked was sweet and filled with soft onions and onions. It tasted very much like matzatza. I loved grabbing bits of meat with the veggies in a piece of lamb. It won only after revisiting the menu days later that I realized we never got the rice that should have come with the dish.

Given the price, we treated ourselves to one dessert. We had gotten a fried self on Vermont bacon apple-maple latkes, so we ordered more traditional latkes in its favor. Consisting of three tiny squares, the \$8.99 dessert was perhaps the most egregious example of overpricing. The nut-filled layers of maple-sauced potato combined nicely with baked, cinnamon-flavored apples, but given its Jersey Shorehouse dimensions, the experience didn't last long.

I hope the name can't be used at Rebek House. Northern Vermont needs a great Turkish restaurant, and in many ways, that isn't on the right track. There are plenty of dishes

# 1 SIDE dishes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

which he spread mulch in his organic home garden. After he found out about the soil's possible toxicity, he pulled his tomatoes to find "really tiny root balls."

Despite the health department's green flag,



Walsterholme, a chemist-practitioner, plans to remove all the vegetables in his garden and replace the soil. "It looks like one of the pesticides [deposited] is absorbed into the plant," he says. "I'm not a big fan of toxic stuff."

On Monday, managers at the Chittenden County Solid Waste District — which runs GMC — were feverishly working out remediation strategies, trying to balance the relatively low level of contamination with damage to gardens. "We're asking, what's fair to people?" says **MARINA CARMONA**, GMC's general manager. "Do we reduce the cost [for cleanup]? How do we compensate for plants? Then we have

to deal with our insurance company." Walsterholme and a few other gardeners with whom Seven Days spoke say that, in the front, they would appreciate compensation for the compost they purchased. "I would like to get my money back for delivery," Walsterholme says. "I'd bought a spoiled product. I would bring it back to the store."

Morais is also consulting with experts and colleagues nationwide to propose what gardeners should do moving forward, and how fast those compounds might break down. He has already initiated recovery in his own garden. "We're trying to determine, what's the longevity of that in the soil? That's critical."

— C.W.

Note: A longer version of this story appears on [blest.thebrownbag.com](#).

## Crumbs

LEFTOVER FOOD NEWS

Looking to gorge for a good cause? Show up at **CARPE's** first annual cookie-eating contest on Sunday, July 16, at 1 p.m. at the [WARM FARM MARKET](#), just across the street from the

bakery. The event benefits Camp Ta-Kan-Ta, a charity that serves kids dealing with cancer and their families. Check the [Cupcake](#) sidebar page for more information.

An uncommon cookbook project gets a local spotlight in Stover next week. New York author **Jesse Fein Hirsch** will be at the **JEWISH COMMUNITY OF GREATER STOWE** on July 19 at 7:00 p.m. to sign and discuss her book, *Kreigshausen: A Celebration of Survival*, a collection of stories from Holocaust survivors.

Local writer-cook and professional poetry chef, including **PATRICIA HAMMER** of **TRATTORIA LA PESTA**, will serve desserts prepared from the recipes.

The dishes in the book aren't limited to sweet. In 13 international recipes, local family inventors that have been adopted by others such as Mark Battison, Daniel Boulud and Jonathan Waxman. The dinner won't even sell be full of stories of triumph — and food.

— A.K.

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in lose, but others should perhaps be called to action can focus on performing a similar number.

Though touches such as copper plates and earthy-toned bowls are beautiful, the meals come without sides, making them seem bare. It's easy to go through a dinner at Istanbul Kebab House without seeing a vegetable, including rice and salad; would make meals look more complete and better justify the price.

Of course, it would also help to simply

lower those prices. While the meat may be local, there still isn't enough of it in any one dish to explain, for instance, an appetizer that rings up to six digits.

If portions need to be even smaller, as is it, it's more productive to expand Turkish-food needs to a few dishes than to offer them a single dish that breaks the bank. Opportunities to sample would help build a loyal customer base — and with a few new menu additions, Istanbul Kebab House could prove to be a real Turkish delight. ☐

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# Share Cropping

Is the CSA boom coming to an end?

BY KATHRYN PLASS

**T**he atmosphere at Burlington's Intervale Community Farm is festive as customers trudge in, shoving bags in hand, to collect their weekly shares of produce under an open-air pavilion. Rides are rumbling through grassy-anarchy, unaccustomed paper straps on horseback and sprocketless bicycles into a ponytail.

This has been a routine sight at the Intervale each summer for some 15 years, since the community-supported agriculture (CSA) program took off there. Intervale's membership sign-ups begin by the register, where farm manager Andy Jones greets customers. It reads: "Summer shares are still available — please tell your friends and colleagues."

That's a sign that the popular CSA isn't pulling its usual, well, share of participants. The Intervale Community Farm's lagging membership might be chalked up to a number of factors, including Tropical Storm Irene last summer, which wiped out the farm's harvest. Whatever the reason, it's dismal. Shares normally sell out by mid-spring at this farm, which feeds more than 1,000 families each year.

And it's not an isolated phenomenon. Data throughout Chittenden County report that memberships in the innovative farm-subscription model are dwindling. Under the CSA model, consumers pay up front for produce delivered over the course of the growing season, often guaranteeing revenue for farmers at the beginning of the year, when lands are most useful. The model has helped jump-start a new generation of local farmers and consumers.

"There was a real significant role for CSAs over the past 20 years in terms of really putting people connected to local food and the land and their farmers," says Sam Dean, the food-hub manager at the Intervale Center.

But now, she says, the local-food movement is much more robust. "You can get everywhere." That's good news for the local-food industry as a whole, but it's changing the economics on some farms that, for a long time, have relied on income from CSAs.

The days of sold-out shares and waiting lists "are long gone," says Doug Quigley, owner of Steely Lane Farm in Chillicothe. This year his farm sold



Gary Gaudet and Andy Jones

about 100 shares (it had aimed for 120). Quigley says CSA sales are finally leveling off after a plunge a few years back, but the market seems increasingly changed.

In her work at the Intervale Center, Quigley has heard from many farmers about the CSA slump last spring. Some, such as those at the Intervale Community Farm, point out the devastating effect of last year's flooding and erratic weather. The Intervale Community Farm "turned

it" — meaning completely dissolved — 18 acres of vegetables that were microbially contaminated after Irene — a "disasterous" experience, says Jones. He guesses that some members were reluctant to gamble the up-front cost of a CSA share after a previous growing season cut short by several weeks, and

**More food after the classified section, PAGE 10**

think some may still worry (despite assurances from state environmental agencies) about the possibility of soil contamination after the flood.

"The CSA is an interesting model, because it's shared equity, shared risk," says Neal Wenzelius, executive director of the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont. "Last year was really the first year that shared risk was really challenged."



## Farms throughout Chittenden County report that memberships in the innovative farm-subscription model are dwindling.

For Deen doesn't think the CSA dip can be chalked up solely to the storm. She points out that farmers markets are booming, and more and more supermarkets are selling local foods. Farmers add that competition is fierce in the CSA market itself. A listing of organic farms offering CSAs compiled by NOFA-VT swelled from 14 farms in 2004 to 114 farms in years later.

"I think there's a trend toward convenience and people want to have more choices," says Wenzelius.

With some farms defectors to farmers markets or supermarkets, CSAs are increasingly offering new and innovative models to lure customers. Some are offering smaller shares designed for couples or single people; a few have started peddling year-round shares, and some farms specialize in "meat CSAs."

"One of our greatest goals is to allow for convenient access to fresh food," Willard says. Because employees' work schedules, or the distance they travel to work, "making it a CSA pickup on the same day of the week at a consistent time ... is sometimes impossible."

Garden CSAs may not be the most convenient option — but that hasn't stopped Quackel at Stony Lane Farm to make many changes. He's not interested in offering a drop-off location or a workplace CSA because, for him, part of the beauty of a CSA is bringing customers to the farm itself.

It's not just a way to sell people the vegetables; it's a way to have people come to our farm and experience the farm," he says. So, even though Quackel's sales of shares are down from a high of 246 a few years ago — he remains bullish about the traditional CSA model. "I love the CSA, and I hold onto it," he says. "It's my passion."

Jones reports that the Intervale Community Farm's CSA is filled to 95 or 98 percent capacity this year. The farm will have to make up the revenue somewhere else — probably in wholesale vegetable sales to nearby supermarkets — but the stamp in membership this year won't make or break it.

Wholesale is also where Quackel is turning to make ends meet. While the CSA once accounted for 90 percent of Stony Lane's income, that income is now divided 40-60 between the CSA and wholesale business.

In the long run, Jones is confident that the CSA market — while a "niche" — will always attract a certain number of enthusiastic consumers. "There are still a awful lot of people who are psyched about that," he says.

The consumers agree: The scene is jolly as they explore the farm during the second, sunny pick-up day. Charlotte Whistler, a Jennech resident, grows in the field of cut-your-own flowers with a pair of pruning shears in hand. She's been a member of the Intervale Community Farm for more than 20 years and remembers the early days fondly. It was much harder to find fresh, local vegetables back then, she says, and the entire concept of a CSA was unusual.

"When you pick, you go for the good and the bad," Whistler says. While she understands that a bad year — like the one — might pose a financial burden for some members, she says she's resped for more than she's served over her own years with the farm. "It doesn't get any better than that," she says. ☐



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# Aiming to Please

**"T**he girl I'm aiming over will wear socks and ties, and need no cologne," proclaims Frank Butler — the

badass, we-manning, sharpshooting star of Buffalo Bill's *Wild West* Show — early on in *Annie Get Your Gun*. He's certainly not describing Annie Oakley, the spunkily killin' lady who can outshoot anyone, including him. But Irving Berlin's fictionalized account of the real-life markswoman as a love story can't help less — and a glorified tale of Old West one-upmanship that has hit the mark with audiences since its 1946 Broadway debut, Steven Thorne Goldfogel pulls the trigger on a three-week run starting next Wednesday.

## JUL 18 | THEATER

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Wednesday, July 18, 8 p.m., at Asbury Memorial Building. View website for future dates through August. 4-532-23 Info 253-2983 or [buffalowesttheatre.com](http://buffalowesttheatre.com). \$45-\$65 advance.



## Wheel World

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## JUL 14 & 15 | SPORT

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Saturday, July 14, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Sunday, July 15, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Center in Waterbury. \$35-\$65. 802-448-0250 or [vermontmountainbikefestival.com](http://vermontmountainbikefestival.com).







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**CHAMPLAIN REGION FARMERS MARKET** Farmers' market opens May 3 along Main Street in Saratoga Springs. It runs through Oct. 1. Info: 518-581-2525. [champlainfarmersmarket.com](http://champlainfarmersmarket.com)

**CHILDBRUST TUNES & SAILOR JUMPS** For children, parents and grandparents. Includes sailors' style sing-along, sailor tunes, stories, Methodists Church, Vergennes, 9 a.m.-10:30 a.m., \$10. Info: 368-3550.

**MONTPELIER FARMERS MARKET** See [vtvt.org](http://vtvt.org), #5.

**MONTPELIER FARMERS MARKET** Farmers' market begins May 10, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Vermont Farmers' Market, 100 Main Street, St. Albans, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Free info: 273-3865.

**MORNING FARMERS MARKET** Walks up and down the hillside pastures, you can pick fresh fruits and veggies just as they're picked this morning. Panton, Mount St. Andrews, 9 a.m.-10:30 a.m. Free info: 323-1447. [managementvt.com](http://managementvt.com)

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**SHREWSBURY FARMERS MARKET** Involved first a community, artists, artisans, and businesses from around the world. At a present time, Shrewsbury is the only town in Vermont to have a farmers' market. Shrewsbury, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Free info: 329-0479. [shrewsburyfarmersmarket.org](http://shrewsburyfarmersmarket.org)

**PAULISTE FARMERS MARKET** Local entrepreneurs and various opening open markets, including antiques, local fresh produce, prepared foods and artisan services. Montpelier Green, Winooski, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Free info: 471-8887.

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**THE ADVENTURE'S OPEN ROADTRIP** See [vtvt.org](http://vtvt.org), #5.

**REMEMBER** [www.remembervt.com](http://www.remembervt.com)

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**JIM POKOSETTE-MARTIN'S AZTEC TWO-STEP** A traditional Aztec two-step, a traditional dance from the Andes, with a unique instrument and a traditional dancing troupe. Martin's Hall, Williston, 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m., \$10. Info: 476-1182.

**KELLOGGTON MUSIC FESTIVAL** Internationally acclaimed musicians will offer three shows. Dates to be announced. The First Show - featuring musicians from the Berklee College of Music, 7 p.m. Saturday, June 14, Kelloggton Center, Putney, 323-1020. Info: 800-544-1000.

**MINNEHA HAIR & FESTIVAL** A summer concert series, featuring internal local musicians performing diverse chamber music, from all walks of life. Putney Arts Center, Middlebury College, 8-10 p.m. Info: 375-3516, ext. 2504-2519.

**MONTEZUMA SUMMER FESTIVAL** A free music and arts festival held in the Adirondack mountains, featuring local bands, food trucks, and a craft fair. Details to be announced. Town Hill, Corinth, 11-3 p.m. Details to be announced. Info: 757-5222.

**SUMMER SESSION** Small sessions, Middlebury College, Jamie-Kim and Jim Karpowich them as a intense new summer music festival. 40 to 100 great artists, from classical to rock, Magic Hat Brewing Company, South Burlington, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Details to be announced. Info: 279-2111, ext. 2009.

**THE CHAMBERS STRINGS QUARTET** The New Champlain quartet ensemble (top: Marcella Hayes, Vivian and Dumaine) consists of four musicians from the Juilliard School of Music. FRIDAY, JUNE 14, 8 p.m. Middlebury College, 10 a.m.-11 p.m. Details to be announced. Info: 323-1020.

**THE CHAMBERS LYRIC BAND** An award-winning contemporary band based on original songs and covers of the 19th century. 8 p.m. Middlebury College, Concord, by New Haven series. Details to be announced. Details to be announced. Info: 323-2026.

**AMERICANA GUITAR HOLLOW BARN JAM** At Hollow Barn, Katie Paul, Mike Flynn, Karen Lake, Debbie O'Brien, Tom Avakian, Joanie Grossman and Michael Gendron. 8 p.m. 11 a.m. Details to be announced. Info: 323-1020. Details to be announced. Info: 323-1020.

**VERMONT SINGER-HOUSE FESTIVAL** In Fair Haven, Vermont, Rachel Barnes-Poor and the New York Chamber Singers. Details to be announced. Info: 323-1020. Details to be announced. Info: 323-1020.

**WHAT'S HOT IN GAITHERGROVE MUSIC FESTIVAL** What's Hot in GaitherGrove Music Festival, a free family day for the enjoyment of Master's House, participants perform at 10 a.m.-3 p.m. and featured performers present some works at 1:30 p.m. United Church of Peru, 10 a.m.-10:30 a.m.

**WEDDING PLANNING WORKSHOP** Beginning and advanced bakers learn their art and learn to create elegant wedding cakes as part of a one-day participatory project. Green Mountain Audubon Center, Huntington, 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Info: 434-3660.

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**EGG BIKES** See [vtvt.org](http://vtvt.org), #10-11 a.m. Sign in.

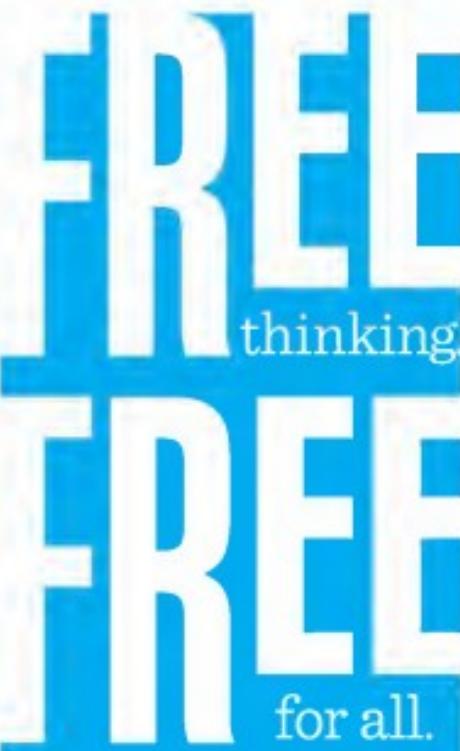
**WATER CYCLOCROSS** See [vtvt.org](http://vtvt.org), #10.

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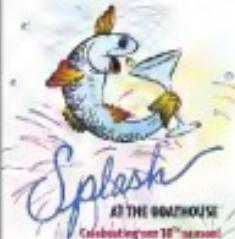
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# music



Photo: Alan Liss/Staff

# iShred

A Vermont music store thrives online

BY JOHN FLAMAGAN

**B**en Werlin and his brother, Beau, then 20 and 26, were sitting on a couch in Tiverton National Bank in 2003 when they decided to re-invent how guitars were sold. Combining their business savvy and Beau's signature selling down approach, Beau selected guitars and the occasional electric or bass on eBay as they created Music Store Live, a website retailer that ships high-end axes from its North Burlington warehouse to customers around the globe.

Now in three beyond year in business, Ben, 31, and Beau, 26, have since added a third partner, Jeff Sirota, and employ an impressive roster of local guitarists. Rough Fusion's Rob Congreco, a graduate of the Lobero-Vista School of Acoustics in Pinetops, Ariz., is the guitar tech. Bob Wagner, who recently joined the star-studded Big Star Family tribute to Levon Helm at Higher Ground, claims the "discoboy" as his MSL job title — he writes the descriptions for each instrument in the catalog.

Zack dePolo and Jim Melvin, both of the Zach dePolo Band, help MSL with marketing and branding, respectively.

Buying guitars online can be a screenshots or orders) both for customers and companies such as MSL. As a report copies of the 2000-square-foot MSL warehouse packed to the ceiling with cases of high-end Gibson Guitars, Taylor Guitars, and more, Congreco sits in an upstairs office filling a complaint with CSRs, who delivered to MSL a smashed Martin from Colorado.

"We never got a '86 '92 from Puerto Rico," Congreco recalls. "It was water damaged because the guy who sent it just put it in no case with plastic wrap."

Regardless of risks, MSL is on the cutting edge of the mass-store industry's future evolution, emphasizing one-on-one customer service over dry ledger interactions.

After MSL purchased a guitar, Congreco draws upon his 10 years of guitar tech experience to ensure instrument plays in tune. He gets real clean each guitar,

substituting new parts when appropriate, then polishes it up for MSL photographer Steve Livaty.

"Steve spends about two hours with each guitar," Ben Werlin says. Livaty uses a high-resolution Canon camera and Photoshop to capture an expansive series of detailed images for the MSL website. Livaty's studio in the warehouse, crammed with grey umbrellas, black dropsets and exotic camera gear, looks like a set from Anderson's 1995 film *Drop-In*.

**OUR GOAL IS BASICALLY TO DO  
EVERYTHING WE CAN SHORT OF ACTUALLY  
PUTTING THE GUITAR  
IN PEOPLE'S HANDS  
BEFORE THEY BUY IT**

— BEN WERLIN

After the shoot, Wagner plays each guitar to determine its "voiced."

"I think every guitar has some quality that will speak to different players," he says. "I just find those qualities and try to highlight them in my description."

Wagner's musical versatility enables him to audition on a guitar to characterize its style. "For example playing D tuned not E is very different from the way you play Bill Frisell's solo jazz part," he explains. "If I play an E9 or a Jackson, I'm going to flip out and play crazy stuff. If I get a Tele, I'll play country shit."

After capturing the vibe, Wagner writes a "player's perspective" for the listing; he recently described a '64 Fender Jaguar as "literally burning with rage." In his description, Wagner includes the history of each guitar and answers everything from body condition to the engraved lettering on the neck.

"I think we write some of the most thoughtful descriptions in the business," Werlin says.

MSL's aggressive customer-service campaigns include a personal introduction of each guitar to its potential buyer via Wagner shrugging over Skype. Buyers have plug-in with their preferred guitars in hand and see their potential purchase in action.

"Our goal is basically to do everything we can short of actually putting the guitar in people's hands before they buy it," Werlin says. "And they get to hear a great player play their guitar, which helps."

He adds that YouTube demonstrations for each instrument are forthcoming in a few weeks.

Each MSL guitar is sold with the company's signature Certified Used Guitar Guarantee, which promises compensation

for any fault undetected in the tech check. MSL also stresses the importance of speaking with customers over the phone, to sustain the one-on-one interaction that acoustic shoppers are used to.

"People are going to phone down two to three thousand dollars on a guitar," Werlin says. "They usually have some questions."

Though MSL specializes in high-end vintage guitars, the company will also ship amps, basses, keyboards, effects pedals and any other crucial accompaniments. The business began with just used guitars, but Werlin says gradually half of what he sells now.

"That will probably shift again when we bring the Center Guitars gear in," he adds, referencing his newest hire, Brian Baumano, CG's own vintage guitar buyer on the East Coast. Baumano is leaving his position at the Manhattan Center Center to join the MSL team.

Though several local music stores have recently closed, Werlin doesn't expect the brick-and-mortar guitar store scene to disappear completely. He cites Gitar Center, which is experiencing more franchise sales, the former Rudy's Andy Music store front in Williston, as an improving.

Customers can buy guitars in person from MSL by appointment.

"People could have a field day here," Werlin says as he looks at a rack of six MSL guitars that include Jazzmasters, Les Pauls and 200s. He estimates his warehouse currently holds some 300 guitars and guitars, none of which sit as a shelf for longer than 90 days. MSL sells 100 guitars a week, and Werlin expects that to increase to 150.

"Obviously, we have a ton of overhead," he says. "So for the business to work, we have to have a lot of guitars in hand."

MSL plans to give back to the community any era as instrument donation service, once founders allow the company to do so.

Other flavor endevours include pub lining a vintage guitar buyer's pride and featuring a Mail of the Month section by Guitars.com, recently modified, or "deadened," Werlin's Facebook fanpage. With a tone knob as the lead between a mouthpiece hooker and a single-poled pickup, Werlin, who plays to live-coots band the Blow It More It, says he wants MSL to become a resource for guitarists to learn more about their instruments.

"We're going to start sending out handwritten thank-you notes to every customer," he adds.

Avatar, Pearl-Cole, the MSL employees who will take the notes, look up from the piano keyboard Les Paul is behind working on. If MSL's freshly cut deals with Prester Guitars, G-1, Guild, Larrive, Nash and Orange are any indication, Kurtz-Cole will be in for a workload. □

# soundbites

BY DAN HEWITT

## Closing Time

Well, shit. Two weeks ago, we reported on an odd story breaking out of White River Junction that gave rise to speculation that the Tupelo Music Hall may not be long for the world. To jog your memory, our report was based on a story originally published on May 24 by the *Vermont News* ("Tupelo Music Hall Struggling"), which had been sent us a press release by the club's then-marketing director, CHARLIE DENT. Dent stated that the club would be forced to close that summer due to financial shortcomings. The only problem was, according to club-owner SCOTT HAYWARD, that issue was internal and never meant for public eyes.

The day before the *Vermont News* story ran, Hayward sent a letter to customers denouncing the veracity of the VM piece and Dent's press release — Dent was subsequently fired — though he acknowledged the club was indeed struggling to remain financially viable and that he was looking for ways to ensure it remained open — raising on new investors, diverse interventions, etc. It was a strange and unsettling sort of events that cast uncertainty around the fate of the Upper Valley's marquee club.

Given what?

In another letter to customers last week, Hayward informed the club will close its doors on Saturday, August 4, after roughly two years of operation. If you've never been, you have seven chances between now and then, including a performance by ANNE TAUSCH — James' son — this Friday, July 13, and songwriter ANA PONICKI on Saturday, July 14.

With the closing of Langdon Street Cafe in Montpelier last year — and to mention Saint-Hubert Abbey before that — Tupelo's impending departure continues a disturbing trend of venues outside Chittenden County becoming apparently untenable. Obviously, the financial challenges of creating and operating a music venue, regardless of location, are significant. But it's puzzling that in a statewide community that prides itself on supporting the arts, we continue losing significant venues.

In Tupelo's case, one could speculate on a number of reasons that led to its demise. Ticket prices generally dropped sharper than at other area venues. Even though customers could theoretically save a few bucks thanks to the club's BYOB policy, they'd fail to suggest a ticket



George A. Johnson

shock might be a factor when staring at a \$45 tag for, say, *BANK STAR ORCHESTRA* this Tuesday, July 17. By comparison, the *BRAMBLE BEAN* tickets bands May 7 above at Higher Ground sold for \$22 in advance and \$25 on the day of the show. That's not an ideal example since *DISCO* appearing TMRW show is, in fact, sold-out — perhaps aging hippies in the Upper Valley have more disposable income. But that price disparity was not unusual. And given an economic climate in which people tend to be more frugal with their entertainment dollars, that's a tough sell.

Another possible factor was that the club's booking strategy skewed older, predominantly toward the demographic around WVM and nearby New Hampshire. Luring up-and-coming folk singers is fine and dandy, but rarely did the venue book shows that might attract younger music fans further afield to make the trek. That's a big chunk of the music-loving public to ignore. Then again, LSC caters almost exclusively to a younger crowd and didn't make it either. (Note to self: Never buy a nightclub.)

Regardless of the reasons why, it's a shame Tupelo Music Hall didn't work out. Armed with a state-of-the-art sound system, it's one of the best-sounding rooms in Vermont. It's also unfortunate for a region with comparatively few nightclubs; external options to live another day are flimsy.

In his letter to TMRW customers, Hayward writes that he's working with the building's landlord to find a new tenant, so maybe some brave soul will

pick up where Tupelo is leaving off. In the meantime, thanks to Hayward and company for putting a go.

## BiteTICKET

In lighter news, the cool kids from MSR Presents are throwing a combination fashion show and rock concert at Main Street Landing in Brattleboro this Saturday, July 14, dubbed Crosswalk A Fashion Show Styled by Sound.

Local sartorial stylers including *PARNASADA*, *BARACUDA* and *KARUZO PHANTOM* will provide the tunes while models strut the catwalk clad in cool duds from local designers. The show is a benefit for COTS, which recently held its day auction themed by the apocalyptic disaster movie that blew through on July 4. Apparently, God likes to go bawling on Independence Day, who knew?

Anyway, the show is ostensibly for a good cause, and a setlist from the gig gets you in free to the rockin' after-party at Signal Kitchen later that night with *DELETED NOTES*, *THE GONE BEES*, *PEACEFUL CLAMS* and *SPIT ANIMAL*.

If you're gonna make a list of the most important rock albums of the last 30 years, *MINOTAUR*'s *Neverendum* would have to be at or near the top. The Sande group's third studio record was serving the most influential albums-of-the-decade and remains an all-time classic.

— DANIELLE B. PITT

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- 31 DONAVON FRANKENREITER  
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- 31 BLITZEN TRAPPER  
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- 31 GREENSKY BLUEGRASS

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SWEET IN SILENCE, FREE THROATSON

- 15 NORTHERN EXPOSURE  
OPENING ACT: THE FOLKATEL  
DEB STANCHFIELD

- 15 MICKEY HART BAND  
OPENING ACT: THE ROLLING STONES

- 15 ANDREW BIRD  
PAUL DE MARINA

- 15 INGRID MICHAELSON  
CROSSWALK

- 15 SMASH MOUTH  
OPENING ACT: THE ANN ARBOR

- 16 DAVID BOWIE  
OPENING ACT: ROBERT PLANT & THE BAND OF HOPE  
OPENING ACT: GREGORY PAUL  
OPENING ACT: ROBIN THICKE  
OPENING ACT: ROBERT PLANT & THE BAND OF HOPE

TICKETS

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## music

### CLUB DATES

MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY, 10:30 P.M.

## Original Synth

Borrowing rhythms from 1980s pop, early acid rock and go-go — among myriad other disparate sounds — the latest album from **RELATED HOMES**, Young People's Church of the Air, is an ambitious and artful melding of experimental electronica with pop aesthetics. But the album's sonic complexities are tempered by the band's emotively hooky sensibilities, which results in a groove-oriented, yet emotionally sweeping and accountable music that both challenges and warms. This Saturday, July 14, the band plays the Crosswalk Indoor Show after party at Siglo Kitchen in Burlington, with locals **SPINY ANIMAL**, **CIVE BOSS** and the **PRESENCE CLAW**.



SAT. 7/14 DELETED SCENES (ART BOCH)

## WED.11

Burlington area

**LIZ UNGARO**, tenor with QD Ensemble, 7:30 p.m., Free

**GREENBRIER LANE**, in Keweenaw

FRIDAY 7/13: Keweenaw, 7:30 p.m., Free

**WING IT BAND**, WINEHOUSE, 7:30 p.m., Free

**DRUMMER LEE**, drummer, 7:30 p.m., Free

**FRANKY ZEE**, Keweenaw, 7:30 p.m., Free

**DRUMMER LEE**, drummer, 7:30 p.m., Free

**MANHATTAN PHISH**, PHISH, Open Mic with Amy Lee, 8 p.m., Free

**MONKEY HOUSE**, Monkey House, 8 p.m., Free

**THE ROLLING STONES**, Rolling Stones, 8 p.m., Free

**MONKEY HOUSE**, Monkey House, 8 p.m., Free





# REVIEW *this*



## Waylon Speed, *Valance*

(CD) \$14.99 (TEN CD)

Waylon Speed, undoubtedly Burlington's most renowed country-music outfit, no longer require any introduction. This is a band hell-bent on making a name for itself, and its members have played their cards — Texas Hold 'em would be my guess — extremely well from day one. Since the quartet's inception in 2010, Waylon Speed has released two full-length albums — 2010's *Georgia Overdrive* and 2011's *Brookless & Mud Overdrive* — and one EP, 2011's *Icons*. Each effort markedly improved upon the last, and their live show, as you most likely know, are not to be missed. As Kelly Rizzo's do-it-home lyrics frequently suggest, the wheels on this vehicle have no intention of slowing. A follow-up, in many cases, would signify nothing short of death.

Palace, Waylon Speed's latest effort, trades in the classic-country themes of whiskey, speed, guitars, trains, smoke and best friends' wives. Perhaps it is sounds trite-as-paper, but one assured that Waylon Speed transcends cliché and delivers to listeners all that is great about balls-to-the-walls country music, and American music in general.

An almost mind-numbing energy runs through this album, from its fast notes to its lift. The guitar, drums and bass work — courtesy of Chastain Blauwakker, Kasey Crossner and Noah Crossner, respectively — that drive Waylon Speed down the dusty back roads and endless interstates of America sound like Johnny Cash's Timbuktu. These ruts' on some serious asphalt roads. This is energy that would have been incomprehensible in

the 1950s. Tracks "Then Again" and "Killer Time" feature some of the finest quick-fingered guitar solos to come out of a Burlington shop in a long minute. Rizzo's lyrics regarding "broken bottles, broken bones and broken hearts" ("Smashin') are written and delivered with heartfelt sincerity.

Recorded live to two-inch analog tape, *Valance* has a timeless quality — so rare these days — that can only be emulated in a room full of musicians playing alongside and against each other. And that's it.

Put that record on, turn it way up, and pour yourselves off hot coffee; you're now in a heat-up old truck and don't give a damn about open container laws.

Waylon Speed play the Parker Pic Co. in West Glover this Saturday, July 14. **SEAN HOBBS**



## Willie Wright, *This Is Not a Dream*.

(CD) \$14.99 (10CD.COM)

Unless you were around Greenwich Village in its 1960s folk heyday, you've probably never heard of Willie Wright. A member of the Hard-core doo-wop group the Persuaders and later as the leader of his own band, the Willie Wright Trio, he was a prolific songwriter and respected vocalista who never quite achieved the same notoriety as the Village contemporaries with whom he often shared stages — like Nick Drake, Phil Ochs, Richie Havens and Judy Collins. To raise a few: Wright's music, a mellow blend of acoustic soul and folk, has largely been left behind, his albums perhaps relegated to the dusty usefulness of NYC record stores or flea markets. Wright, now 73 and in an advanced stage of Parkinson's disease, returned

from performing in 2012, after spending most of his post-New York career living in Boston and gigging around southern New England. Last year, his signature 1970 album *Telling the Truth* was re-released on Vermont's Green God Records, to the delight of hardcore folksies and audiophiles. That album's re-appearance set the stage for Wright's latest effort — his first in 14 years — *This Is Not a Dream*, released earlier this year. Recorded in 2013 at Burlington's Low Tech Studios with the help of a hand full of the singer's Vermont-based pals, the album is a bittersweet affair. The humble collection of laid-back originals reveals a gifted songwriter, and shows man who is grappling with words, declining health in the face of a debilitating illness.

For that latter reason alone, *This Is Not a Dream* is a remarkable record, a triumph. Wright's warm, easy crack crackling through your stereo speakers is nothing short of soothing. Comparisons to Bill Withers in the senior's later years are not at all outlandish, but to focus solely on the singer's battle with Parkinson's is to do a disservice to his considerable talents in a songwriter.

Wright has a simple, straightforward style that matches his gentle croon. The earnestness both in his words and delivery is compelling and comforting, whether he's singing about love, social issues or, in the case of a bare-concept piece "Trust," offering guidance despite disease.

Wright's Vermont friends, including multi-instrumentalist Erik Raata (bass, guitars) and the Zorring family, son Peter, percussionist Bill Carl, and guitarists Bob Greer, from a self-haircutting head and Fannie Wright's mother with the same name, reflect simplicity and folk sensibility with which he writes. The casual quality of their collective performance puts the focus squarely on Wright and reflects his easy charm.

*This Is Not a Dream* probably won't catapult Wright to long-evergreen fame, but that hardly seems the point. The mere fact that it exists is an achievement and inspiration, a reminder that there is beauty and pleasure to be found in life, even when days seem bleak.

*This Is Not a Dream* by Willie Wright is available at [williewrightonsite.com](http://williewrightonsite.com).

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## northeastern

**BREATHLESS** Anais Mitchell  
Bingo Bango, Longfellow 7:30 p.m.  
\$15-\$20, 617-871-2000.

**RIVER HOUSE RESTAURANT**  
Shang Thien Night, River, Roxbury

## MON. 12

## Burlington area

**CLUB METROPOLIS** 10:30 p.m.  
Music Box present Motown  
Monday Nights, free.

**METRONOME Metal Headz**  
Knight'sbridge, 830-841-7696,  
8 p.m., \$15-\$20, 860-229-1111.

**CINNAMON & SUGAR** Open Mic with style, 7 p.m., free.

**RAINFOREST** Lenny "Skeezie"  
Palje Lang 8:30 p.m., \$25,  
7 p.m., Free, 1977 Highland St, Lenox  
Green (opposite) Ty in Free  
Dinner May 18, 6 p.m., free.

**RAILROAD** West African  
percussion, 7 p.m., Free, Mystery  
Mongrels, 2nd floor, 3rd-street, 7 p.m., free.

**ROBBIE JAMES** Why Not  
Music with Eddie (play live),  
8 p.m., free.

## central

**BAKERS** Open Mic, 7 p.m., free.

## northern

**HOGES** Folk Session (solo  
acoustic blues), 8 p.m.

## TUE. 13

## Burlington area

**BIG BEEHIVE** Lullaby & Lullaboo  
Lobster, 6 p.m. Blue State Beer  
Cafe, 1100 Main St., Stow, 800-845-2000.

**BUDDY WALK** Concert of  
the Best of the Best, 8 p.m.,  
Clocktower, 2nd fl., 88-181.

**HEART & SOUL ROCK TAVERNA**  
Open Mic, 8 p.m., free.

**HEART & SOUL** The Humans, Electro  
Rock, 7 p.m. (post), 9 p.m., free  
Ferry 300, 90-10.

**ON TAP BAR & GRILL** 8th Anniversary  
Tap Fest Entertainment, 7 p.m.  
Free.



**On the Road** On their latest road, American Goldberg – named after a Japanese motorcycle – performed's **WILSON TRAPPER** explores a distinctly American sort of nostalgia. It is, in essence, a musical road trip, an album of wistful memories and wistful laments that ask life's larger questions until a repeat round here of psychadelic American blues and hard rock. This Friday July 13, the band makes a pit stop at the Higher Ground Shreveport Ballroom, where the **ACACIA JAZZ** opens.

**WADDEY REAR** Laramie (Wyoming)  
8 p.m., 8:30 p.m., Free, 1st set,  
Westin Big Horn, 800-432-1000.

**WILSON TRAPPER** Laramie (Wyoming)  
8 p.m., 9 p.m., Free, 1st set,  
Westin Big Horn, 800-432-1000.

**WEDDING SONG** Greg Evans/Tom  
Holland, 8 p.m., Free, 1st set,  
Westin Big Horn, 800-432-1000.

**NEW SQUARE MUSIC HALL** Dark  
Side of the Moon to Metallica  
tribute, 8 p.m., 9 p.m., free.

**FINCHES RESTAURANT AND**  
BAR, 7 p.m. (open since  
November 1978), Free.

**centrefold** BACK TO YOUR PUNK! John  
Reisner & Sarah Moshman (802)  
7 p.m., free.

**GRANADA'S** Kalamazoo, MI p.m.,  
free.

**TOPFOLK MUSIC HALL** Dark  
Side of the Moon to Metallica  
tribute, 8 p.m., 9 p.m., free.

**champlain valley**  
TWO BROTHERS TAVERN, 7 p.m.  
right, 8 p.m., Free, Monteregie  
Kingsbury (802), 9 p.m.

**Northhampton** BEEHIVES, 7 p.m.,  
Post Inn, 1st set, 8 p.m., free.

**INDIANS** Open Mic, 8 p.m.,  
8:30 p.m., free.

## WED. 14

## Burlington area

**CLIQUE** Present by CLOU  
Drug Rehab, 10 p.m., 10 p.m.,  
Free.

**BRASSERIE CAFE** The Kitchen  
Fork, 4 p.m., 7 p.m., free.

**CINNAMON & SUGAR** Randy  
Dobson band (post), 8 p.m.,  
8:30-9:30.

**FRANZY B-S** Karaoke, 9:30 p.m.  
Free.

**WADDEY REAR** Laramie (Wyoming)  
WILSON TRAPPER, 7 p.m.,  
Westin Big Horn, 800-432-1000.  
\$20-\$30, 8:30 p.m., free.

**AP'S PUB** Pub, 10 p.m., free.

**MANHATTAN TAP** CAFE & PLATE  
Open Mic with Rudy Lopez 8:30 p.m.,  
free.

**MEET ME** Orange Revolution  
Climbing Gym, 8 p.m., 9 p.m.,  
Free, 2nd fl., 9 p.m.

**ONE PIPED BILL** Open Mic with  
Evan Hanson, Ryan, Finn,  
On The Spot & Bill, 8 p.m.,  
Free.

**PANDA** Open Mic, 10 p.m.,  
12:30 a.m., Field Trip Tapas Bar, 8 p.m.,  
\$10-\$20, 10 p.m., Free, Monteregie Social  
Club, Intermediate, 11 p.m., Free.

**PIR SQUARE** Upstairs, 10 p.m.,  
Progressive Society (bring  
yourself), 1 p.m., Free, 7 p.m.,  
10:30 p.m., Free, 11 p.m., Free, 12:30 a.m.,  
Free.

**PIR TRADE** 100 Main St.,  
10 a.m.-11 p.m., 10 p.m., free.

**THE GINGER BAKERS**  
Pandora (Montgomery), 7 p.m.,  
\$20-\$25, free.

**THREE RIVERS RESTAURANT AND**  
BAR, 7 p.m., free.

**WEDNESDAY NIGHT** Open Mic, 8 p.m.,  
Last Call, 8 p.m., free.

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Last Call, 8 p.m., free.

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# Man of Steel

David Stromeier, BCA Center

**J**ust outside the BCA Center's Church Street entrance, a building-sized sculpture 12 feet wide transforms the street into an art site — a place where the speed of gravity intersects with the slower time of elemental materials and artistic process. The sculpture, "Festive Rock" by David Stromeier, is based on a sandstone monolith the artist found on his Roxbury Falls property and selected for its geometry and elemental surface, but also its being — as an "spirit," he explains. "Festive Rock" seems to approximate both qualities, even as it is something the original, was not: a monolith.

At 65, Stromeier is tall and trim, with parting eyes set deeply under wavy eyebrows. Soft-spoken, yet possessing a certain gravity, the sculptor exudes an understated confidence as he describes his artistic process as a dialogue between himself and his chosen materials: steel. Though he doesn't hold an engineering degree, Stromeier's decades of experience have taught him to "read" steel, and to engineer sculptures that maximize the malleability of the material while preserving its tremendous strength. Some of the results of those years are on view at Stromeier's 12-year retrospective at the BCA Center, and at the "Exposed" exhibition at the Helen Day Art Center in Stowe this summer.

Stromeier's deep understanding of the materiality of steel and his intuitive feel for bleeding form, color and shape produce works that, at their best, sing. "I've made something like 400 sculptures," he says. "Probably roughly 40 percent of those are large scale. Even though I have that depth of experience, I know that when I start the steel piece, it won't necessarily be better than the 40th, or even later than the 300th one."

Stromeier works steel "cold," meaning that the metal is softened when he shapes it using a massive, 150-ton press. He begins his works with small-scale models, or maquettes, that he later scales to monumental size in steel. Yet, for all the calculations, the numbers don't always satisfy him. "You get a no-



STEEL HAS A GREAT DEAL OF  
ABILITY TO BE MANIPULATED...  
I WANT TO PUSH IT MORE  
AND SEE WHAT IT CAN DO.

DAVID STROMEIER

now that you think is good enough to go  
on to a larger scale," the artist explains,  
"and it doesn't always work out.  
It doesn't always sing. It's very hard to  
get it to be perfect."

Stromeier's process is costing  
"Five Bobble," a recent work sited near  
the center of Burlington City Hall Park,  
is made of four grotty curving planes  
of steel painted in shades of blue. The

work arose from experiments in Mexico and adobe in his Austin, Texas, studio over the winter. "I wanted to twist steel," he says, "but all you have to do with plastic is warm it up, and everything's easy."

Naturally, twisting steel is more of a challenge. In the summer, at his studio in northern Vermont, the artist spends up to 10 hours a day forming his models into full-scale steel sculptures. "That's where my 40 years of experience comes in," Stromeier explains with a smile. "I've done some things in metal that even the most sophisticated steel fabricators would be scratching their heads trying to figure out how to do."

His studio is a corrugated structure  
perched near the crest of a hill on a prominent, 260-acre property that Stromeier owns with his wife, Sandy Arnes

the expansive property, enormous  
painted-steel sculptures punctuate the emerald hills. Inside the studio, lifting equipment and a metal vise divide the spacious interior. This massive machinery indicates the force required to shape a seemingly intractable material into sculptures that seem light enough to dance over the fields. Stromeier says that, despite the challenge of creating these works, he hopes they appear "effortless" when completed.

Early in his career, Stromeier says, he clung doggedly to the manufactured form of machine-cut steel — industry-standard beams and sheets — but in recent years, his work has taken a more playful, fluid form. "As time went on, I wanted to push the material," he says. "I wanted to explore its plastic quality. Steel has a great deal of ability to be manipulated ... I want to push it more and see what it can do."

In an era when art can be increasingly ephemeral (think digital and video installation), Stromeier's sculptures are touchably material. They are colorful and large, made to engage with viewers, who can walk around and feel through them. The approachability of much of Stromeier's work reflects a quality he values in his own life. "As I get older, I have to be more and more elegant to have a serious play ... and I mean play as for a kid plays ... being open to the environment and whatever comes along," this is what, he believes, to staying fresh as an artist.

As he considers his retrospective exhibition in Burlington, Stromeier resists assigning a single "arc" to his career so far. Instead, he emphasizes the importance of staying open to ideas and inspiration. "Finally, Stromeier's works make me re-examine his forms with curiosity, and perhaps with a joyful awe at the transformation of material into myself."

AMY FARN

David Stromeier: Equilibrium. Green  
Archispace, 100 Church St., Burlington.  
Through September 8. Center summary:  
Through October 12.

Stromeier's work is also included in the  
"Exposed" exhibition at the Helen Day Art  
Center in Stowe, July 13 through October 12.  
For more details, visit [helen-day.com](http://helen-day.com).





**HENRY'S WATCHING IN BRADSTREET** Avril

Whitney Museum of American Art, 200 Madison Avenue at 75th Street, through July 26. **THE WOODS** By Henry Moore, paintings by Philip Morris, drawings by David Hockney, sculpture by Henry Moore, prints by David Hockney, and a film by Julian Rosefeldt. Through July 26. **SCULPTURE** By David Hockney, Julian Rosefeldt, and others. Through July 26. **SCULPTURE** By David Hockney, Julian Rosefeldt, and others. Through July 26. **SCULPTURE** By David Hockney, Julian Rosefeldt, and others. Through July 26.

**northern**

**DELL'ERICO & MARSH J. POKORNÝ** "The Water" (Stones of Water), paintings in Forest, inspired by images of Pennsylvanian limestone and film. Through August 15. **WEIR** *Brilliantly*, sculptures in stone. Info: 253-3849.

**ELIZABETH MILLIGAN** "Gentlemen Landscapes," small-scale, framed watercolor and pencil sketches. Through July 22. **CLIFFORD RESTAURANT & FINE ARTS** Info: 865-5481, 865-6306.

**ENGRAVE** A group show featuring designs by local engravers and metalmithers. Through July 26. **ART CENTER** At 251 Johnnycake Hill. Info: 748-2500.

**FANTASIA** A group show featuring daggers, vibraphones, armchairs, flying saucers and umbrellas, portrayed by Ray Frost, wood glens and paintings. Through July 26. **WESTCHESTER KINGDOM** Armchair, Quilted Restaurants, Gallery 101, Johnson City. Info: 748-2500.

**HEADING HOME OR EMERGENCY?** **THE DIVERGENT STYLES OF THE SAFETY BAR** A series of 100 artworks by students from the New York State University at Albany. Made from cutlery parts, a collection of ancient Roman tools, the parchment containing your plan, and other add-ons. Through August 10. **THE MUSEUM OF THE STATE** Life in Bloom. Info: 626-4426.

**HIDES ON THE ISLANDS** 1,000 artworks, including small hand-painted maps with modern designs, some of which have been grouped into sets. Through July 26. **INTERARTS** Info: 476-5049.

**IMPRESSED: VERMONT PRINTER** Prints by Vermont Printmakers. Through July 26. **THE TOWER** Info: 865-5474. **HAL MARTIN & HAL** **BRADON** Info: 865-4749, and email to [hal@halbrandon.com](mailto:hal@halbrandon.com). **STUDIO** Through July 26. **ART44** *Art44* Day Art Center. Info: 748-3356.

**JENNIFER HUBBARD** Authoring the Characters, postcards on an easel. Through July 26. **TRANSFORM CAFÉ** At 740 Main St. Info: 748-3356.

**JIM COLLINS** *Summits*, photographs of Cuba and other subjects. Through July 26. **THE HUT** 86 Main St. Info: 748-3356.

**JOHNNY CLARK'S STUDIO** Preliminary sketches in charcoal or graphite. Through Aug. 10. **THE GINGER NECTARINE** Fine Art gallery in Stow. Info: 323-1818.

**JULY SHOOT** New works by Stefano Galgano, Paul Vitale, Mattioli, and Jo Ann Wallen. Through July 30. **ART IN ARTISTS' RESIDENCE** Cooperage Gallery and Reservoir Tools. Info: 748-3356.

**LARRY OLSZAK** Prints at 7 postcards by the Visual Art Center. Through August 15. **THE STONE** Info: 865-5481. **ARTS** Info: 865-5481.

**LUCILLE WILSON AND MARINA VASILYETTE** Oil on canvas. **ARTS** Info: 865-5481. **ARTS** Info: 865-5481. **ARTS** Info: 865-5481.

**MARIE-OLIVE DE VERA** Prints and linocuts by the Worcester Art Museum. Through July 15. **CRISPE GALLERY** 10 Jenkins Ave. Info: 748-3356.

**REPORT AN IMAGE/PERFECTIVE** Private gowns, porcelains and monochromes plus new artworks depicting local landmarks, porches and Lake Champlain imagery. Through September 1. **THE CLOTHESLINE** At the Academy in Johnson. Info: 324-1960.

## NORTH HATCH SHOWS: 86-867



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# movies

## Savages ★★

**O**scar Isaac has given us an unforgettable fable of bloodshed, betrayal, greed and doomed love against the backdrop of the drug trade. The problem is, he's part of it in almost 20 years ago. It's called *Savages*, and we're the ones to blame.

After his happened-in-the-1980s career as a reputation as one of the most intellectually provocative and artistically restless filmmakers of our time, And then he faded out as a quiet cult figure, it's a long day down from *Waking Ned*.

With his latest, the Oscar-winning director has miraculously managed to recover his status as he goes back to the one who got him started in the first place: Diaz. This one is set up like he was born to it, the one that dialed into Michael's 2010 vision about race, borders and California's past: dealers who go in with a Mexican cartel. There are complications to be made between their story and Tracy Morgan's. Unfortunately, *Savages* suffers from many of them.

Adam Johnson is Isaac's tormented brother, Tucson's Kingpin. There's a texture of two tones in the Malibu duo who had the foresight to bring a stack of killer acids home with him

from Afghanistan. Together they've built an empire, amassed a fortune and enjoyed the dubious誉 of a California girl named to what happened with them.

It's hard to see things going well for Isaac in the early scenes, as he tries to an octopus moment with his two namesake: the demands of life & death, a drug deal doesn't seem to reward his efforts and keeping that constantly bonging first up. After John Carroll and Rodriguez, the guy deserves some happy music.

His haze is burned in big way though, when Chon shows him a video he just received on his laptop: 1974, an invasion from a powerful Mexican cartel. Images of several people being decapitated by chains and cut off by machine gun fire, followed by the suggestion that he and Chon play hell if they don't want to join the newest members of the Black & Decker crew.

I found it almost impossible to take seriously anything that happened from this point on. It was one of those episodes I run by the least interesting drug lord in movie history — a dimwitted doof in a Cheesecake played by Ed Helms. She spends her



ED HELMS  
Helms gives over  
the top performance  
as a cartoonish bandido

day giving foot massages from a service and whining that her daughter should visit more often. We never learn how she keeps the t1c t2c psychopath who works for her in line.

These include Dennis Hopper as a mad-level manager and Benicio Del Toro as a bad-level assassin. We know he's bad because he runs his nephews and twists that mace-like bite. They judge D in onsets. October is flag along with the dusty omega but Hopper's power play-brother, and the California Strongman on his name. United, I saw Strength. I didn't realize that a game of Legion Street would prove so much threat to a really less Tijuana cartel. *Waking Ned's* lesson: carefully indoctrinated.

It also tells us lessons in how not to make a film. Its intrusive young men have the combined screen presence of dryer lint, while

seasoned vets such as John Travolta are upstaged in repetitive afterthoughts. There's much to be learned here for aspiring screenwriters, too. For example, don't write dialogue like this just given status to D as a stellar nice to Chon: "I have options, he has no game." And don't indulge in gobbledygook like multiple endings — especially when neither of them is satisfying, odd, and reminiscent enough to bring.

Finally, what *Savages* taught me is that it may be time to stop hoping for Isaac's better self. The guy's all 30s made an admirable contribution to the art form, but he hasn't directed a legitimate film in nearly two decades. Even *Waking Ned's* lesson: carefully indoctrinated.

It also tells us lessons in how not to make a film. Its intrusive young men have the combined screen presence of dryer lint, while

RICK KISDARER

## REVIEWS

### The Amazing Spider-Man

★★★

If you're a Marvel Comics fan, you probably know all about the roundabout history of *The Amazing Spider-Man*. But if you're a casual viewer, you probably won't be. That's where this blockbuster spider-Man movie will reign in the past decade. *What they "knew"* the franchise with a new cast, director and storyline, instead of just making a joke?

Never mind the movie, which has to do with rights, money and scheduling fits or anything. The important thing is that casting and casting make the difference between a decent movie and one which, without feeling stupid (*Catwoman*), and supercilious. That's why Peter Parker (Andrew Garfield) who is known for the above-average romance comedy (*25 Days of Summer*), *The Amazing Spider-Man* has the screen and snappy dialogue it needs, but no story doesn't work.

As Peter Parker, Andrew Garfield (*Cloud Atlas* played Mark Ruffalo's), manages to make the character of the wall-crawling, Given Tracy Gorman (Stone) who probably could (Chris Evans). Webb slows down and lets these relationships develop slowly, with the notes coming along the way.

Given the press of watching an upended high schooler dodge bullies, give other a girl, mess around in a lab and become Spider-Man all over again.

Some have called Garfield's performance the "best" counterpart to Tobey Maguire's parkier Parker. It's more accurate to say he does a witty impersonation of a teenage complete with bad posture, mood swings and random comeuppances of success. There's nothing pro-what about this Peter, but also nothing bratty or needful. When he's waving a mask and gauging a causal one, he's a bit of a nerd, but he's a nerd who looks like a smart every-day kid would pull off — he could walk walls and climb down his wires.

Given the press of watching an upended high schooler dodge bullies, give other a girl, mess around in a lab and become Spider-Man all over again. The overachieving Gwen Tracy Gorman (Stone) who probably could (Chris Evans). Webb slows down and lets these relationships develop slowly, with the notes coming along the way.

Given the press of watching an upended high schooler dodge bullies, give other a girl, mess around in a lab and become Spider-Man all over again. The overachieving Gwen Tracy Gorman (Stone) who probably could (Chris Evans). Webb slows down and lets these relationships develop slowly, with the notes coming along the way.



REED MORSE  
Great start to a movie with lots of surprises in the third days of release.

performance by showing themselves up with sophomore 2004, *Spider-Man 2*. The F97 that finally comes off as thoughtful, emotional, indeed seriously intelligent at all — but when his transformation starts in his back yard has human narrations sound a curiously digital issuance.

At that point, anything resembling human or subtlety vanishes, too, and *The Amazing Spider-Man becomes...you guessed it — another big CGI farce. Many buildings are blown up, many monsters are used and many pieces of metropolis explode to the point Peter Parker can become a man. Sam Raimi, who directed the other three films, was adept at demonstrating clever visual-hack-style magic, but truth drops the ball here.*

The lesser Hollywood studios become of making their fortunes on angel of alas, the more we're forced to accept as simple as robots and robots of various species to the rhythm of the day. Like the classic tales that don't need to tell us to piffle and reshape to their liking, *Spider-Man* legends can easily accommodate creativity that, given the numbers of animation and the international reachability of things going boom, it's a rare one that doesn't build to an overblown, forgettable choice. *The Amazing Spider-Man* works powerfully, but ends up proving itself in its own caught with

MARGOT MARRISON





MOVIE REVIEWS p. 2-18

**SANDBERG** #1 (2 stars) **per week until June**: For a young couple, it's when a Wisconsin drugstore owner is like a shared gentleman (Willie Geist). Oliver Stone directed us against all odds in *World War II*, so he's got a bit of clout. *White House Down* (2 stars) **per week**: With Amy Adams, Bryan Cranston, and John Travolta (3 stars). **Per Capita** (Exxon, May 23, PG-13, 2½ Picture, \$16.99).

**SHOW WHITE AND THE HUNTSMAN** #1 **per week**: **passable** (3 stars) **per week**: Show White (Elle Fanning) plays the title character who teams up with Chris Hemsworth to save her kingdom from the bad guys (Chiwetel Ejiofor, Taron Egerton). *White House Down* (3 stars). **PG-13** (2½ Picture, \$16.99).

**THE WALK** #1 (2 stars) **per week**: Inigo (Elijah Wood) has to walk — and, as it turns out, climb — the fluffy snow-covered companion to his comedy with Matt Rifeberg (Jeff "Wendy Guy").

**WHITE HOUSE DOWN** (Sony, \$16.99) **per week**: **Good** (3 stars) **per week**: **passable** (3 stars) **per week**: **bad** (1 star)

**WHAT'S MY NAME?** #1 (2 stars) **per week**: A man (John Cusack) finds his child has another twin child when he transports his newborns by air to a remote village in India.

**WHAT'S MY NAME?** (Sony, \$16.99) **per week**: **Good** (3 stars) **per week**: **passable** (3 stars) **per week**: **bad** (1 star)

**YOU BOKE WITH A LITTLE** (Fox, \$16.99) **per week**: European capital in a time of gangsterish, backstabbing stories of Vikings, Americans and others in the "ancient city." **Aftermath** (Fox, \$16.99) **per week**: **Good** (3 stars) **per week**: **passable** (3 stars) **per week**: **bad** (1 star)

#### TYLER PERRY'S MADEA'S SWITZERLAND

Perry's *Madea's Witness Protection* was one of the *Madea* franchise's best, a bittersweet comedy about a mother (Madea) and her son (Tucker) who are forced to leave their home town because of a local mobster's family's tangled up in a multi-million-dollar scheme, are forced to be a sort of fugitives. It just happens to be the Southeast's most attractive female prostitutes. *Madea's Witness Protection* — **suppose** — **success** (4 stars) **per week**: **comedy** and **adult** (13+ Picture, \$16.99).

#### NEW ON VIDEO

**AMERICAN BORN CHINA** #1 (2½ stars) **per week**: A gang of high schoolers from American families, most mixed race, are forced to take a grueling 10-month tour of China to eliminate their past life of days and nights of beauty, shenanigans, with China May, Jenny Huang, Seann William Scott, and Eddie Peng. *American Born Chinese* (2011) is based on *Scholastic's* *Haruki & Kotori's Escape from Guantanamo Bay* (2008) (2½ stars, R).

**BEING LYNNIE** #1 (2 stars) **per week**: A young mom (Paula Deen) feels herself struggling with the challenges of her newness and (Robert De Niro) in this drama based on *Robyn Young's* *Another Mother to the Author* (2007). *White House Down* (3 stars) **per week**: **good** (3 stars) **per week**: **passable** (3 stars) **per week**: **bad** (1 star)

**MARGARET** (Arrow Pictures) **play**: A teenager (Margaret Qualley) who is the only one left in her small town after the rest of her family has moved away. *In this long-on-the-sob-level tale*, *sad drama*, *that some critics have called one of the best of 2011*. *With* *Mark Sammer, Max Rydahl and Isabelle Marshall*. *Kenneth Branagh* *You Can Count on Me* (Coming Oct. 19) *and* *Brooklyn* (Oct. 26, 2012).

**movies  
you missed**

AN EXCERPT FROM BLURB,  
THE SEVEN DAYS STAFF BLOG

## Movies You Missed 46: *God Bless America*

This week in *Movies You Missed*: **Comedic** (R-rated) **disaster** *Relief* (Gold Coast) brings up a darker than ever comedy. A war vet decides writing in letters to his wife can't be the start of healing Americans.



#### What You Missed

**M**iddle-aged Frank (Dad Murphy, who played Fred Stuven on *"Mad Men"*) is having a bad day. His numbers are staged and low. So is everybody on his TV. Everywhere he goes, people are drowning, celebrating or quoting Fox News. When Frank makes a few horrendous eruptions to a coworker, he's fired for sexual harassment. His ex-wife is getting remarried, and his daughter is a mother at a loss.

But wait, the day isn't over! Frank's doctor informs him he has a terminal brain tumor ... and passes in the middle of his consciousness to take a call.

When Frank sees a prepared item on a reality show berating her parents because they didn't buy her the right car, he stops.

MARGOT HARRISON



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**ARIES** (March 21-April 19) During an other tour a few years ago I was a guest on San Francisco radio station KTFQ. Ten or twelve years later I interviewed about my book and astrology column. Then we moved into a new house outside, leaving all our popular power tools dreams and remembrance. But, of course, the tool went in. "So why was I in my pad now?" Although I can't be in the habit of revealing people's previous incarnations, a suddenly and inexplicably had the sense that I knew exactly who he had been. Sure enough, a contemporary Italian author I'd just met you may soon hear comparable experiences. Aries, don't be surprised if you are able to give new revelations about the past and come to fresh insights about how history is unfolding.

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20) There and tango! And a tango! Taurus, be witty and catchy and provocative. Don't go on too long. Listen, I'm framing for more. Work for dramatic effect. Perfect your enigmatic smile, drop hints and charm ladies with the power of pantomime. Add a new twist, or two, to your body language, literacy in the subject, ways you think. Pose questions that no one has been asking. Turn them straight to the point. Hang out in thresholds, crossroads and any otherwise where the action is centering.

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 20) Americans political leaders who have never been soldiers tend to be more gung-ho about sending U.S. Fighting Forces than will those leaders who have actually served in the military. So said former Marine captain Matt Portnoy in *TheDailyKos.com*. I recommend that you avoid any present comparisons situations in your area life during the coming week. Gemini, don't put yourself under the influence of become leaders who have no direct experience of the issues that are important to you. The some standards should apply to you too. Be humble about predicting forward of things, even if you more than a transversal understanding of things. As much as possible, make your choices and end your cloud-based on what you think first.

**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22) Smart people believe that a great era segment lies in a Scottish Leo. They call it the Loch Ness Monster or Nessie for short. The evidence is amaz-

ing and doctored off the creature actually exists at the murky depths, it has never hurt any human being to it can't be considered dangerous. On the other hand, Nessie has long been a boon to tourism in the area. The natives are happy that the rest of us existence are very id like to propose using the Loch Ness monster as a legend for how to deal with one of your sorry afflictions. Use your natural need to encounter big interplay, might it be harboring, and figure out a way to take advantage of the intriguing story you created about it.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) "The soul should always 'sing,' says 19 century Emily Dickinson poet in one of her poems." That fine human impulse will not be abrogated by death. Or any of troubling "this." Modern translation now should keep your dear psyche in a constant state of readiness for the possible outcome whatever happens or unexpected turnings. Then very likely to recognize the self when it comes and resulting with the ability necessary to get the full benefit of its offerings. This is always a sound principle to live by. But it will be an especially valuable strategy in managing stress. Right now imagine what it feels like when your soul is a property again.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) Some people wonder if I'm more like extroversion than an objective reporter. They think that maybe I invigorate the past and exaggerate the present that lie ahead. I understand why they might pose this question. Because all of us are constantly besieged with a disproportionate glut of stimulating news. So it is my duty to provide a countervailing. My comment is evidence is proof you from the difference that the conventional wisdom propagates. Having said that, it'd like you to know that I'm not countervailing at all when I tell you this news. You close to a seeking a financial advantage over a frustration that has manifested you a long time.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Life always grants melody the teacher we need at every moment," said Zeta teacher Cheriene Joie Beck. "This includes every moment every atmosphere, every day and night, every traffic jam, every obnoxious supervisor (or employee) every dilemma, every loss, every moment of joy or depression, every addiction, every pose



## Cancer

(June 21-July 22)

Let's hypothesize that there are two different kinds of love possible for you to pursue. One is simplistic and sterile, while the other is meaningful and fertile. The first is characterized by absence or emptiness, and the second is full of rich information and stimulating experiences. Is there any doubt about which is preferable? I know that this simplistic, sterile formula might be easier and faster to aspire. But its value would be limited and short lived. I'm afraid, in the long run, the tougher iteration will be more rewarding.

of garbage, every trash." While I appreciate Beck's advice, I'm impressed in the way she puts such a heavy emphasis on lessons we can learn from difficult events. In the end, mind you, be proud that this is straightforward. Your teachers are likely to be ingenuous, benevolent and generous.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) A lecture is a lecture that plays a chain of metal or wood or clay and leaves it so that someone welding a tool can form the chain into a specific shape. From a metaphorical point of view, I would say you are being held by a concert

table right now. Ed or Edie in whatever you prefer to call it is cheating away the noncontact stuff so that to sculpt a more beautiful and useful version of you. Although the process may be somewhat painful I think you're probably with the results.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) I'm hoping you will take maximum advantage of the big opportunity that awaits for you. Express in enhancement of your writing. That right for the foreseeable future, you not only have the potential to experience enhanced and more acute perceptions. You could also undergo an upgrade. In the equity and profundity of your sounds so that your sight, smell, taste, hearing and touch will harmonize gather in timer data. For best results, set aside what you believed about one word, and just think in the purest possibilities. In other words, focus less on the thoughts that would assault your mind and simply notice what's going on around you. The extra credit: Cultivate an optimistic curiosity with everything you'll be exposed to.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) When faced with odds, it's for the young chewing gum while walking down city streets and then suddenly you witness, compelling the going mass from your mouth onto the sidewalk. I'd say that it gets stuck to the bottom of your shoe, which causes you to trip and fall, allowing you to find a \$100 bill that is just lying there unclaimed and that you would have never even had had you experienced your little bit of "bad luck." So, ready to cash in on unforeseen benefits of fate, Aquarius.

**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20) Having served as a teacher you possessed of the medieval American Think Tank, I may not seem like the most believable advocate of the virtues of careful preparation, painstaking execution and steady progress. But if I have learned anything from competing with hemispheric economists, it's that there's not necessarily a conflict between thrill seeking and self discipline. The two can coexist, even go together. I think that's a reality true for you right now. You're the quiet and intense type of your playground, but you're in direct opposition to your self-command.

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**Curses, Foiled Again**

Police and Stevens Montzka, 32, settled into a booth at Vaseline, N.J., where he had a weapon and demanded money the first with an undisclosed amount of cash but didn't yet for his getaway car en route. He then called for a taxi, but police subdued Montzka before it arrived. "We're Gonna Eat You," he said. The weapons turned out to be a garden hose spray nozzle. (New Jersey Star-Ledger)

Bonnie parents around Myrtle Man's Turbo Tax, 28, of using Turbo Tax to file a false tax return claiming a \$12 million refund. Despite Department of Revenue opposition, the return was filed and issued the return without audit and for that amount. She promptly paid the tax to go on a spending spree totaling more than \$150,000. Officials learned of the fraudulence tax return when Reyes notified Turbo Tax that a second tax card was lost or stolen. Turbo Tax notified state authorities, who discovered the fraud and arrested Reyes.

Meanwhile, the Revenue Department's Dennis Carpenter said the idea of Reyes' claim caused the tax agency to be flagged. Multiple people witnessed the electronic document but approved it. "We do not know how many \$21 million refund claims" he said. "It absolutely should have been caught and we see no reason why it wasn't." (Salisbury KATU-TV and Associated Press)

**When Advertising Isn't Enough**

Homes over Sherry Bach imposed that while she and her husband were away, their daughter was sleeping upstairs, someone broke into their home in Westlake, Ohio, took on the trash, vacuumed the carpet and cleaned up the pleasure. Then left a note saying, "I'll come here to clean" followed by her name and hers. Both she and her called and called Sue Warren, who answered, "What happened, did you get the wrong house?" she said, "No, I do that all the time." I said, "What do you mean?" she said, "I get stop and clean your house." She changes were final that day, but the month before, police charged Warren with assault, trespassing for breaking into and cleaning another house. (Cleveland's WKYC-TV)

**Arm the Animals**

In an effort to curb poaching figures and enforce endangered wildlife laws, India's Maharashtra state declared that it's no longer a crime for forest guards to shoot suspected poachers on sight. Reporting first guards should not be "subjected for human rights violations when they have taken action against poachers," Maharashtra Forest Minister Prakash Singh Patil added that the state will end, once ratings and grants to state forest guards will offer secret payments to individuals who report

poachers and related smugglers. (Associated Press)

**Lost Generation**

Video games and online pornography are ravaging young men's brains so that they develop constant stimulation according to psychologists Philip Zimbardo and Nicholas Christou. The authors of the book *The Dilemma of Dope: Why Boys Are Struggling and What We Can Do About It* and their research indicates video games and pornography are "sexual addictions" whose attraction is military rather than more of the sexual, as with drug, alcohol and food addictions. This craving for the next thing the researchers conclude, is creating a generation of risk takers who are unable and unwilling to manage the complexities and risks inherent in relationships, school and employment in their pursuit of "a tech-based buzz." (CNN)

**Slightest Provocation**

Police charged Jason Andrew Kist, 23, with shooting another man in Cornelius, N.C., by mistake last year. The suspect's father said the death occurred after the two men argued at a neighbor's over whose truck was better. (Associated Press)

**Ironies of the Week**

Mariette Hines, 24, was charged with

drunken driving about an hour after he left a candlelight vigil in Oswego, N.Y., that he organized for three friends killed in a car crash while drinking. (Oswego's Patchwork Times)

At the funeral for a 19-year-old amateur skier in Bear Mountain, Ga., attended by 800 mourners, Paul De Rose's Saville Suit had just finished delivering a eulogy advocating nonviolence when two men in the crowd started shooting at each other. Both died. "The first thing I thought to myself was, 'My God, was anybody listening to what I was saying up there?'" Saville said. "I think many people were. Unfortunately not enough." CMS NBC and the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*

**Double Dipper**

Authorities charged Timothy McDowell, a news editor in Maynard, Mass., with writing checks to himself from the local retirement fund totaling \$331,573. The reported theft occurred while Mr. McDowell was being prosecuted for stealing \$170,000 from an account he'd worked for. According to Assistant District Attorney Doug Nequin, prosecution for the second case, Mr. McDowell wrote a check to himself from the retirement fund to cover a \$75,000 restitution payment for the first case. (Boston's WXYZ-TV)

## 2012 Season is Open



# 5

Free public hand cast  
gymnastics 2012 year!  
Saturday, July 28th  
Monday, August 6th  
Saturday, August 11th  
Tuesday, August 14th  
Saturday, August 18th

\$5,000 Home Entertainment System Giveaway - 8/2

Lake Monsters 10th Anniversary - 8/18

Strong Birthday Audi - 8/5

\$2,000 Jewelry Gift Card Giveaway - 8/7

4,000 Retirees Gift Card Giveaway - 8/2

### Kids Run the Bases

Run the bases post-game every Monday thru Wednesday

### Kids Eat Free Thursday!

The first 500 kids 12 & under eat for free on Thursday

### Friday Night Fireworks

Stay after each Friday night home game for a spectacular post-game fireworks show!

### Have a Catch! Sundays

Be on the field after the game and have a catch!

[www.vermontlakemonsters.com](http://www.vermontlakemonsters.com)



"Not One Heaven"  
1,25 hot dogs all night!  
Monday, August 20th!



# COMICS

BLISS BY HARRY BLISS



“I’m your career. You’re just standard.”

TED RALL

ON RETURNING A LAW AGAINST VETERANS CLAIMING TO HAVE SERVED IN THE MILITARY, THE SUPREME COURT RULES THAT LYING IS PROTECTED SPEECH UNDER THE FIRST AMENDMENT



LULU EIGHTBALL



THE X CHRONICLES "IS THAT I DON'T SMELL?"

I WONDER WHAT BOBBY  
IS GONNA DO WITH  
ALL THOSE PAIRS OF  
"SHOESHINE SHOES"  
THAT HAVE BEEN  
SHELFED DUE TO  
PUBLIC OUTCRY.

I GUESSES FOLKS  
DON'T TAKE TOO KINDLY  
TO A BASKETBALL SHOE  
DESIGNED WITH ORANGE  
SNACKLES &  
CARINS  
ATTRACTED TO IT.

WHETHER YOU THINK THE  
SHOES EVOKE SLAVERY, THE  
MISS INCARCERATION OF  
BLACK MEN, OR THE RUGGED  
LIFE OF THE SHOESHINE MANNEQUIN  
WHO MADE THEM, IT'S A HUGE  
LACK OF JUDGMENT.

AND JUST THINK: SOMEONE WHO GETS  
PAID WAY MORE THAN WE DO  
THOUGHT THIS WAS A GOOD IDEA.  
GAGA!  
IT'S MUNCH  
THE  
POT-  
RACH!

AND MAYBE IT ISN'T OVER,  
IT'S THE MOST BRILLIANT  
MARKETING CAMPAIGN EVER!



OR, MAYBE THEY JUST SAW ALL  
THE PANTS OFF TO THAT AFRICAN  
COUNTRY WHERE THEY SEND ALL  
THE VICTORY T-SHIRTS OF YOUNG  
THAT LOST THE SUPERBOWL.



THIS MORNING WORLD

BY TOM TOMORROW

THIS WEEK: YOUR  
CORPORATE  
DEMOCRACY

ATTACKING YOUR OWN  
THE INVISIBLE HAND





# AMERICAN ELF

THE SKETCHBOOK DIARIES  
OF JAMES KEECHALEA

## DUNGEON ADVENTURE

In this strip, we continue our quest through the Caverns of Trapped Dwarves. And here we are in the last level leading home. We'll never make it home again, but we'll probably have another adventure, right? Just don't expect us to be as brave as we were the first time around.

The giant undead STAB-FACE is a mystery ARENA—  
1 block away from the STAB-SHOP.

O.M.G. Risk is Number between 1 and 30.

1 2 3 4



TUE, 28, 2012

## RED MEAT

modifying man of mirthlessness

From the pages of MAX CANNON



## TINYSEPUKU © 2012

Dear Tom,

I HAVE TO GET IN SHAPE  
BUT I DON'T LIKE EXERCISE.  
WHAT CAN  
I DO?

-GARY

IF YOU CHOOSE TO WORKOUT  
TO 'SLEEPING', THAT WOULD  
REALLY HELP YOU EXERCISE  
WITHOUT BEING AWAKE FOR IT.



I WOULD TRY  
HAND TO THE  
SHIRT ROCK  
ROUTIN.

I FINGER MY COMPUTER  
BY KICKING IT, AND MY  
KEYBOARD AND MOUSE  
ARE WORN OUT SO IT  
TAKES MORE ENERGY TO  
USE IT.

AS FAR AS DRESS GO, YOU  
HAVE TO FINGER INTO THEM,  
START BY REDUCING ONE  
MEAL A DAY WITH A  
HEALTHY ALTERNATIVE.



I'M NOT SURE A  
DOUBLE BRAIN  
CHEESE SANDWICH WITH  
FRIES IS HEALTHY.



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MORE FUN! STRAIGHT DOPE (P.24) FREE WILL ASTROLOGY (P.32) NEWS CLIPS (P.36)

CROSSWORD (P.C.3) CHILDREN & SICKLES (P.C.4)

## CHASING EASY DUCKS



Exhibit one, ma'am. There's a baby duckie swimming in your pool.

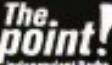
## 17TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY



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The point!  TEAM  PRESENT

# BATTERY PARK FREE CONCERT SERIES

JULY 8TH

**THE BREW**

New England based band known for their indie rock-style tunes.

JULY 12TH

**BOHÈME**

Former lead singer and writer for Everyone Knows with her new band.

JULY 19TH

**BEN TAYLOR**

Forget about his parents, he's really good.

JULY 26TH

**ZACH HECKENDORF**

Colossal indie channel Dan Mangan, John Butler, and Dawson Freshwater.

please no alcohol or glass containers

[pointfm.com](http://pointfm.com)

**The point!**  
Independent Radio

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**Beechwood**  
Beechwood  
Resort

**COMMUNITY**  
**CCV**  
of Vermont

**BCA**  
Burlington Community  
Academy









DIGGERS' MIRTH  
Burlington, Vermont

Diggers' Mirth Collective Farm is a unique collaborative farm with roots in the Burlington Intervale. Founded in 1992, Diggers' Mirth has helped grow accessibility to good food, including helping start the Old North End Farmer's Market. We're proud to offer Diggers' sharp and spicy mesclun mix, sweet baby spinach, crispy large leaf arugula, baby beet greens, and zesty arugula; we also carry their delectable herbs, including beautiful basil, tangy cilantro, fresh parsley, delicious dill, savory fennel and more. Eat deliciously, eat local!



# HEALTHY LIVING LOVES LOCAL

VERMANA HERBALS  
Hyde Park, Vermont

Vermania means "Green Spirit," and Vermania Herbals of Hyde Park, Vermont, captures the green spirit of plant medicine in their beautifully simple and effective natural products. Dedicated to serving our community with micro-local herbal remedies, most of their plant ingredients are grown, harvested and dried within a mile of production. Vermania's products are handcrafted in small batches and bursting with potency.

ELMORE MOUNTAIN FARM  
Merrillville, Vermont

Elmore Mountain Farm produces beautiful natural body care products in northern Vermont. They use their own goat's milk to make creamy and moisturizing Vermont Goat's Milk Soap and soothing and nourishing lotions that smell absolutely divine. Stop by our extensive Body Care Department to treat yourself today!

